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THE NEW YORKER

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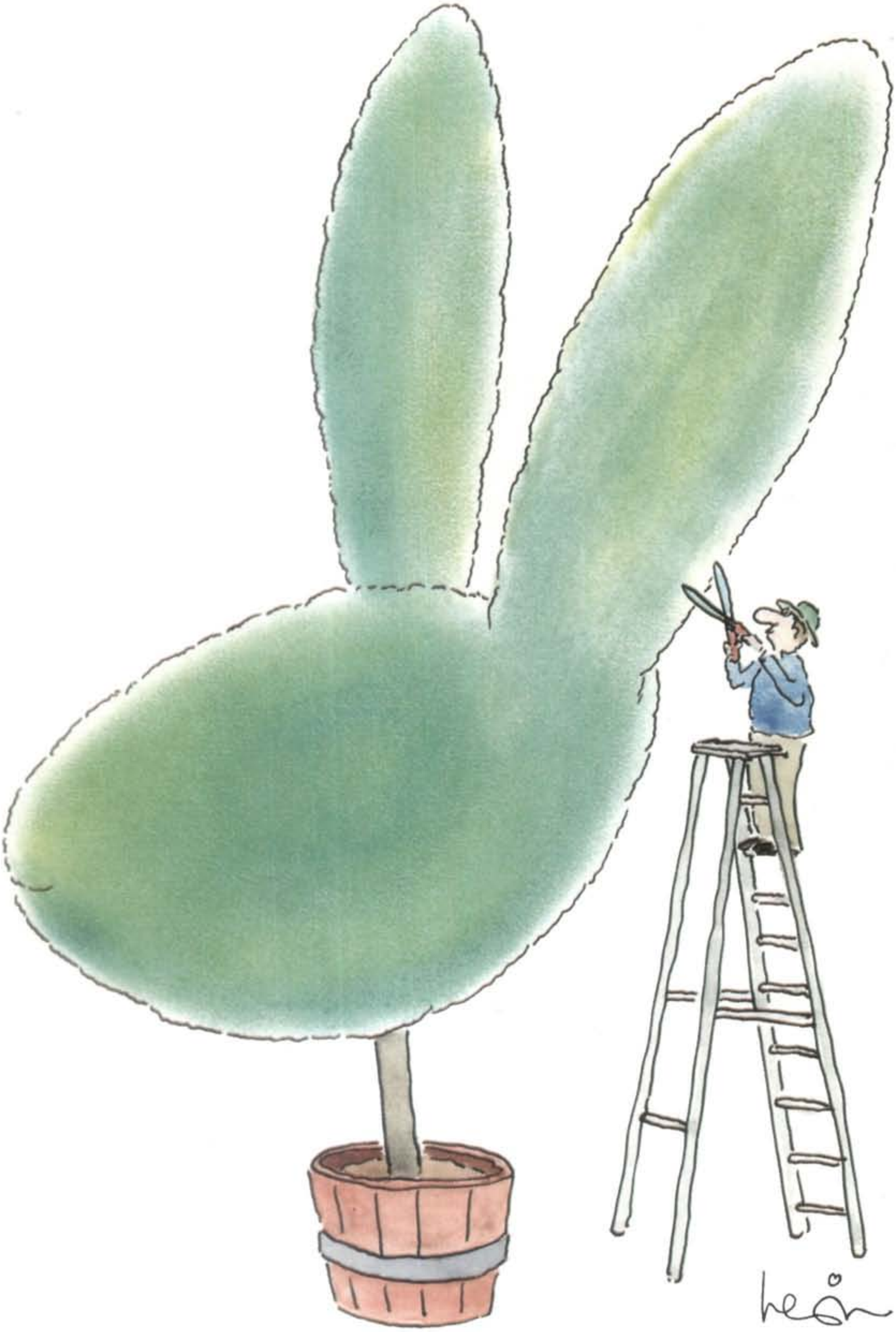

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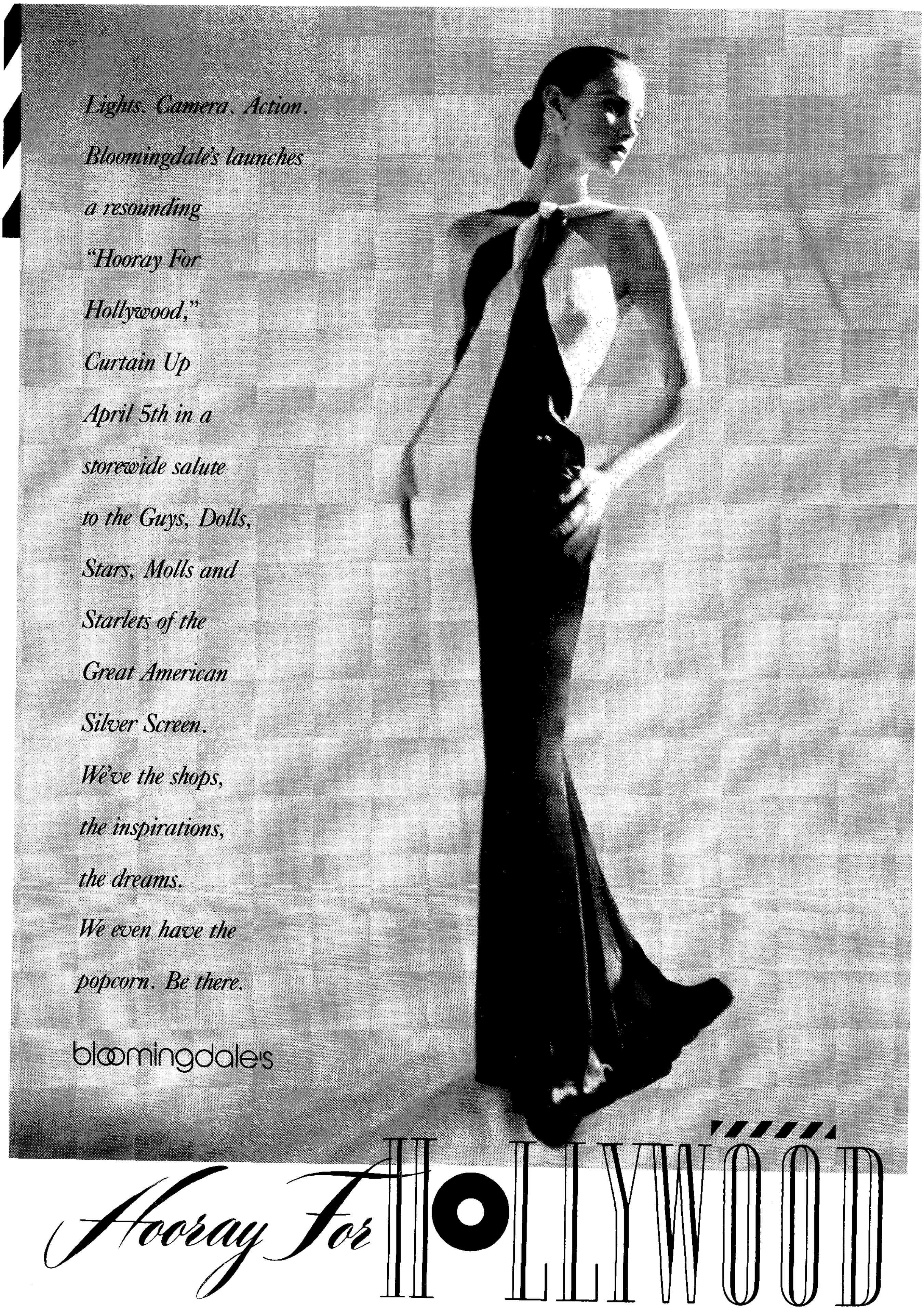
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

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THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Anything Goes—Under the clever direction of Jerry Zaks, this exuberant revival is primarily a celebration of Cole Porter himself. The libretto, as revised from the original by Timothy Crouse and John Weidman, is consistently entertaining. The company, which includes Bill McCutcheon, Howard McGillin, Patti LuPone, Anthony Heald, and Kathleen Mahony-Bennett, does more than justice to the words and score. (Reviewed in our issue of 11/2/87.) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Boys' Life—Directed by W. H. Macy, Howard Korder's engrossing new play is an eminently quotable postmodern comedy of manners that makes an intelligent contribution to the dialogue on the battle between the sexes. (3/28/88) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2.)

The Boys Next Door—The "boys" are three retarded men and a schizophrenic who, under professional supervision, share an apartment. Tom Griffin's good play, though inevitably touching, is also often very funny, and never sentimental. It is acted to near-perfection by a first-rate company, which includes Christine Estabrook, Josh Mostel, and William Jay. (2/22/88) (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Breaking the Code—Derek Jacobi is accomplished and fascinating as the English mathematician Alan Turing, who helped crack the German Enigma code during the war, but Hugh Whitemore's script is more vehicle than play. Michael Gough, Rachel Gurney, and Jenny Agutter are among the good supporting actors. Clifford Williams was the director. (11/30/87) (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, April 10.)

Burn This—Lanford Wilson's play can be considered an occasion for an astonishing performance by John Malkovich, as a foul-mouthed restaurant manager who woos and wins his dead brother's dancing partner. The supporting actors—Joan Allen, Jonathan Hogan, and Lou Liberatore—are also good. Marshall W. Mason was the director, and the distinguished setting was designed by John Lee Beatty and lighted by Dennis Parichy. (10/26/87) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Cabaret—This tasteful revival of the 1966 musical by John Kander and Fred Ebb (directed by Harold Prince) has a gloriously muted Joel Grey re-creating his role as the Emcee and a sterling performance by Alyson Reed, who plays Sally Bowles as she was always meant to be played. (11/2/87) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 869-0550. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The Cherry Orchard—Even the fine performances of Erland Josephson as wistful, hapless Gaev and Zeljko Ivanek as scruffy, passionate Trofimov cannot shed light on Peter Brook's opaque production of Chekhov's masterpiece. (2/8/88) (Majestic, 651 Fulton St., about a block east of Flatbush Ave., Brooklyn. 1-718 636-4100. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 3 and Sundays at 2. Closes Sunday, April 10.)

Equity Library Theatre—A revival of **leave it to me,** Cole Porter's 1938 musical, is the sixth in this season's series of eight productions. (Equity Library Theatre, 103rd St. and Riverside Dr. Nightly, except Monday, at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 2:30. Closes Sunday, April 3. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028.)

Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune—Terrence McNally's enchanting comedy about sex and the sudden onset of love in an apartment on Tenth Avenue in the Fifties. Kathy Bates and Kenneth Welsh are remarkable, under the direction of Paul Benedict. (11/9/87) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

The Gospel at Colonus—A revival of Lee Breuer and Bob Telson's adaptation of "Oedipus at Colonus," with a book by Mr. Breuer (taken from Robert Fitzgerald's translation), lyrics by Mr. Breuer, and music by Mr. Telson. We'd be lying if we said that the show has much to do with Sophocles' play, but it is a roof-raising celebration of black music and culture. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 575-9200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Into the Woods—The new musical by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine is an attempt to show what lurks beneath the surface of conventional fairy tales. The amusing first half is like a musical staging of Bruno Bettelheim's "The Uses of Enchantment." The rather nasty second half degenerates into cheap philosophy. The costumes (by Ann Hould-Ward) and sets (by Tony Straiges) are pretty to look at, and the songs are beautiful or funny—sometimes both. The superb cast, led by Bernadette Peters and Joanna Gleason, is directed by Mr. Lapine. Miss Peters leaves the cast after the Wednesday evening, March 30, performance. (11/16/87) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Joe Turner's Come and Gone—A new play by August Wilson, directed by Lloyd Richards. (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Mat-

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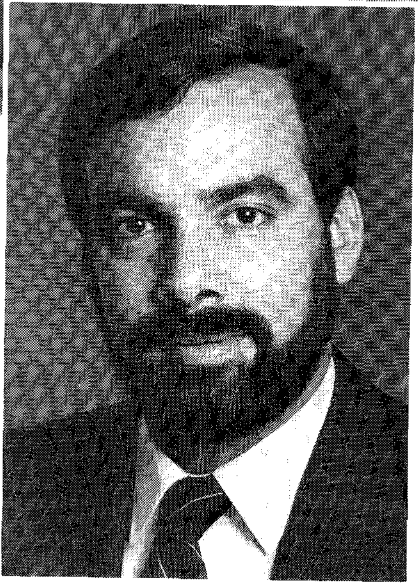

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inées Wednesdays and Sundays at 3, and Saturdays at 2.)

Julius Caesar—The second entry in the Public's Shakespeare Marathon, this production, under Stuart Vaughan's direction, is always clear, always absorbing. Edward Herrmann's Cassius is so strong that he seems to dominate the action, and Martin Sheen makes a fine Brutus. With John McMartin, Joan MacIntosh, and Al Pacino, among others. (3/28/88) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Tuesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Wednesday and Saturday at 2, and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, April 3.)

M. Butterfly—David Henry Hwang's funny, mysterious, and often beautiful play is based on an actual case: in 1964, a French diplomat took as his mistress a star of the Beijing Opera, and some twenty years later—when they were both charged with being spies—discovered that "she" was a he. John Lithgow, in the leading role, gives an exceptional performance, and so does B. D. Wong, as his lover; Lori Tan Chinn, George N. Martin, and Rose Gregorio give them sound support. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Mr. Universe—A play by Jim Grimsley. (Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand Street. 598-0400. Thursdays through Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

The Music Man—The New York City Opera's lacklustre revival of Meredith Willson's love song to small-town America. With Bob Gunton as a disappointingly colorless Professor Harold Hill. (3/21/88) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, April 10.)

The No-Frills Revue—An unpretentious, jokey little show conceived and directed by Martin Charnin. Most of the lively songs—words and music—were written by Mr. Charnin, and the two funniest sketches were contributed by Thomas Meehan. (2/22/88) (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

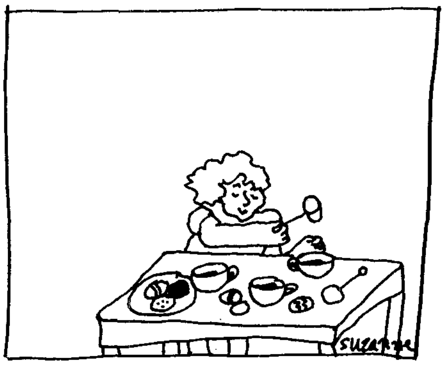
Oba Oba—A Brazilian musical revue, with a company of fifty singers, dancers, and musicians. Opens Tuesday, March 29. (Ambassador, 215 W. 49th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30; opening-night curtain at 6:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

Oil City Symphony—Mike Craver, Mark Hardwick, Debra Monk, and Mary Murfitt, gifted and sophisticated singers and instrumentalists, appear as a quartet of dedicated hicks reuniting at their small-town high school in this very funny, very musical musical. Mr. Hardwick and Miss Monk, by the way, are alumni of the beguiling "Pump Boys and Dinettes" of blessed memory. (1/18/88) (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

The Phantom of the Opera—The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets (by Maria Björnson), everything about the show is negligible, including the overhyped performances by Michael Crawford and Sarah Brightman in the leading roles. (2/8/88) (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Rashomon—A revival of the 1959 play by Fay and Michael Kanin based on stories by Ryunosuke Akutagawa. The cast includes James Saito, Kiya Ann Joyce, and Norris M. Shimabuku. (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2.)

Sarafina!—This South African musical, an explosion of talent, was conceived, written, and directed by Mbongeni Ngema, who also, with Hugh Masekela, composed and arranged the score. It is a show about a show that is put on by a brave group of high-school students in Soweto, and that dramatizes the events in their lives. The events are bleak, but the spirits are blazing and the acting, dancing, and singing, to a local form of popular music called Mbaqanga, are a wonder. (11/9/87) (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)



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Señora Carrar's Rifles—A revival of Bertolt Brecht's 1937 play, with Miriam Colón in the title role. Directed by Alejandro Quintana. Performances in English Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; in Spanish on Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30 and 8. (Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 354-1293.)

A Shayna Maidel—A well-wrought and deeply moving play by Barbara Lebow about a Polish-Jewish family torn apart by the events of the Hitler era. The production is beautifully directed by Mary B. Robinson and is enhanced by two extraordinary performances: one from Gordana Rashovich as a concentration-camp survivor and the other from Paul Sparer as the father who failed to get her and her mother out of Poland. The year 1946 is perfectly evoked by William Barclay's setting. Bring lots of Kleenex to this one, but expect to leave uplifted. (11/30/87) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

A Streetcar Named Desire—Blythe Danner, as Blanche Du Bois, is not at her best in this Tennessee Williams revival. The production, directed by Nikos Psacharopoulos, features Aidan Quinn as a preppie and petulant Stanley Kowalski. (3/28/88) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Tamara—A participatory theatrical encounter, in which the audience must literally follow the characters as they move from room to room in what is supposed to be Gabriele D'Annunzio's villa. Pre-happening cocktails and a buffet at intermission are included in the rather hefty ticket price ($95 to $135). (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. 307-7171. Nightly, except Thursdays, at 8; cocktails at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2; cocktails at 1:30.)

A Walk in the Woods—Lee Blessing's absorbing play is set near Geneva and consists entirely of the conversations, over a year or so, of an American and a Soviet diplomat who have gone there to negotiate an arms treaty. No agreement is reached, but a friendship grows and deepens. Under the direction of Des McAnuff, Sam Waterston and Robert Prosky give performances as distinguished as the roles themselves. (3/14/88) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Wenceslas Square—This play by the late Larry Shue, about an American professor and one of his students in Prague in 1974, is insubstantial but, under the imaginative direction of Jerry Zaks, always fascinating, whether funny or sad. Four fine actors appear as the many characters, Czech and American. (3/14/88) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

York Theatre Company—A revival of **LOST IN THE STARS,** the Maxwell Anderson–Kurt Weill musical based on Alan Paton's novel "Cry, the Beloved Country." (York Theatre, 2 E. 90th St. 534-5366. Tuesday and Wednesday, March 29-30, at 8. Closes Sunday, April 17.)

Long Runs—**BROADWAY BOUND:** A rueful comedy in which Neil Simon studies the middle-class depths from which he sprang and has kept springing. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Mondays through Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to the sets and costumes by John Napier. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **DRIVING MISS DAISY:** Frances Sternhagen and Earle Hyman star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3. Special performance for the Equity Fights AIDS Fund Monday evening, April 4.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** 11,624 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **FENCES:** Billy Dee Williams has the lead in August Wilson's powerful play. Lloyd Richards directed. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **42ND STREET:** A musical based on the old Warner Brothers movie, and by no means an improvement on it. Directed and choreographed by the late Gower Champion. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 398-0280. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8:15. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:15, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **ME AND MY GIRL:** An infelicitously rehabilitated British musical out of the thirties, with Jim Dale. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Gary Morris and Anthony Crivello star in the musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel, but the real standouts of the production are the settings, by John Napier, and the lighting, by David Hersey. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2.) . . . **THE NERD:** This farce by Larry Shue is a source of laughter from beginning to end. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, April 10.) . . . **PSYCHO BEACH PARTY:** A romp through early-sixties beach-blanket movies, written by Charles Busch. (Players, 115 Macdougal St. 254-5076. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3. Special performance for the Equity Fights AIDS Fund Monday, March 28, at 8.) . . . **STARLIGHT EXPRESS:** A bore on roller skates. (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **STEEL MAGNOLIAS:** This first play by Robert Harling is set in a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana, and consists mainly of the often amusing, wisecracking chatter of the proprietress, her assistant, and four steady customers. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 6 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

The Circus—Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey's hundred-and-eighteenth edition. (Madison Square Garden. For information about show times and tickets, call 563-8300. Through Sunday, May 1.)

Bittersuite—A pleasant revue of songs about middle age by Elliot Weiss (music) and Michael Champagne (lyrics). (Palsson's Supper Club, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 5:30 and 8.)

Blue Hill Troupe—Presenting benefit performances of Gilbert and Sullivan's **Yeomen of the Guard.** (Hunter College Playhouse, Park Ave. at 68th St. Monday through Wednesday, April 4-6, at 8; Thursday and Friday, April 7-8, at 7:30; and Saturday, April 9, at 2 and 8. For tickets, call 831-1383, Monday through Friday between 1 and 3 and between 6 and 8.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Presenting **The Desert Song,** by Sigmund Romberg. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Saturdays and Sundays at 3:30. Closes Sunday, April 10.)

Liliane Montevecchi on the Boulevard—A one-woman show. (Kaufman, 534 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Nightly, except Tuesdays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 5.)

Without You I'm Nothing—Sandra Bernhard in a one-woman show. Previews Tuesday and Wednesday, March 29-30. Opens officially on Thursday, March 31, at 7. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477. Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Tuesday, March 29, at 8; Fridays and Saturdays at 8 and 10:30; and Sundays at 5:30.)

DANCE

Cisne Negro Grupo de Danca do Brasil—A company from São Paulo, appearing here for the first time. With guest artists Fernando Bujones and Yoko Morishita. Program A: Tuesday, March 29, at 7:30; Friday, April 1, at 8; Saturday, April 2, at 2; and Sunday, April 3, at 3. . . . ¶ Program B: Wednesday, March 30, at 7:30; Thursday, March 31, and Saturday, April 2, at 8; and Sunday, April 3, at 7:30. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989.)

Paul Taylor Dance Company—Opening performances of a four-week engagement that will run through Sunday, May 1. Tuesday, April 5, at 7: "Esplanade," "Runes," and "Brandenburgs" (première). . . . ¶ Wednesday, April 6, at 8: "Cloven Kingdom," "Rhapsody on a Theme" (première), "House of Cards," and "Syzygy." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989.)

Jazz Tap Ensemble—A company of three tap dancers and three musicians. With guest artist Harold Nicholas. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Tuesday, March 29, at 7:30; Wednesday through Friday, March 30-April 1, at 8; Saturday, April 2, at 2 and 8; and Sunday, April 3, at 2 and 7:30.)

Dance Theatre of Harlem—The first of seven performances—"Doina," "Manifestations," and "Firebird." (Davis Hall, City College, Convent Ave. at 134th St. 690-4100. Sunday, April 3, at 3.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**Steve Ross,** a singer-pianist whose interests run from Eddie Cantor to Kander & Ebb, will be in the woody nook known as the Oak Room at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen Tuesdays through Saturdays. Dining.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A neat-as-a-pin cabaret on the edge of Chelsea, near the flower and fur markets. **Jim Morris,** a takeoff artist best known for his ability to mimic the thought processes and speech patterns of Ronald Reagan, is here at nine Tuesdays through Saturdays, making fun of all the boys running for Reagan's seat. Mary-Cleere Haran sings at eleven Thursdays through Saturdays. Moynihan & Green, a comedy pair, perform on Tuesday, April 5, at eleven.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A really blue but not really New York jazz club; the idea for the brass plaques that are engraved with the names of visiting jazz stars and embedded in the blue tables appears to have been borrowed from Hollywood. Pianist **Kenny Barron** leads a combo on Monday, March 28; **Chick Corea** and **Gary Burton,** two makers of plush, pretty melody, play piano-vibraphone duets Tuesday through Sunday, March 29-April 3; **Tania Maria,** a Brazilian-born pianist and singer, brings in her band on Tuesday, April 5. Music from nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—On the east side of the building, behind a dusty display window, there's a New York *Post* review of a Santana concert that took place here circa 1978; curatorial neglect seems to have made it a permanent exhibit. Inside, it's avant-rock guitarist **Vernon Reid** and **Living Colour** on Monday, March 28: country singer **Nanci Griffith** on Tuesday, March 29; Latin-jazz pianist **Michel Camilo** and singer Dianne Reeves Thursday through Saturday, March 31-April 2; blues singer **John Hammond** and David Lindley on Monday and Tuesday, April 4-5; and Mike's Talent Show on Wednesday, April 6. The last event is a kind of variety show (no animal acts) run by a professional performance artist-ironist named Mike. Mike's guests include Chucklehead and Quentin Crisp. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A great up-close view from a bar-stool (unless there are a lot of standees, which is usually the case) of first-rate pianists and bassists. **Fred Hersch** and **Harvie Swartz** work together through Saturday, April 2; **James Williams** and **Ray Drummond** take charge on Monday, April 4. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlos I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—Long communal tables swathed in pink and a bandstand panelled in oak. **Carrie Smith,** who has a deep, resounding, down-in-the-valley voice, sings Tuesday through Sunday, March 29-April 3, with a quartet led by trumpeter **Clark Terry; Helen Merrill,** whose whispery voice suggests that each word she sings is a secret, will be here starting Tuesday, April 5. Mondays belong to baritone-sax man **Hamiet Bluiett** and his big band. Music from nine. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The figures on the wall of the Café Carlyle—a nude at her easel; a leaping poodle; a guitarist in a harlequin outfit; an unpedigreed dog with a bonnet in its mouth—are by Marcel Vertès, and the personage on the piano bench is **Bobby Short.** Bassist **Beverly Peer** and drummer **Robbie Scott** flank him. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at ten and midnight. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Bemelmans Bar, **Barbara Carroll** presides at the piano from nine-forty-five Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Drums, 333 E. 60th St. (308-2333)—A rock lounge within the shadow of the Fifty-ninth Street Bridge. It has about a million dollars' worth of sound equipment and décor, including striped jungle-cat banquettes to admire it all from. Doors open at around nine-thirty, and shows start at ten-thirty. Dancing.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—There's not a lot of elbow- or headroom in this downstairs jazz club, but the musicians sometimes make you forget all about it. **Scott Hamilton,** a thirty-three-year-old tenor saxophonist whose big, breathy sound has led people to imagine that they are hearing Ben Webster or some other Swing Era ghost, will be here with his quintet Tuesday through Sunday, March 29-April 3. On Tuesday, April 5, **Ron Carter** brings in his string-heavy octet (his usual two-bass quartet, supplemented by four cellos). On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **Les Paul,** the Thomas

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Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

Greene Street, 101 Greene St. (925-2415)—Only slightly smaller than an airplane hangar, but considerably fancier. On clear nights, the piano, situated in a grove of palms in the south-central region of the dining room, is visible from the bar. **HAL SCHAEFER** will be at the keyboard Tuesday through Saturday, March 29-April 2; bassist **CECIL MC BEE** joins him on Friday and Saturday. **MICKEY TUCKER,** a member of the Farmer-Golson Jazztet, goes to work on Tuesday, April 5. Sets begin at seven Tuesdays through Thursdays, at seven-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays, and at six-thirty on Sundays. Closed Mondays.

J's, 2581 Broadway, at 97th St. (666-3600)—An upper-West Side spa, one flight up from the hurly-burly. Jazz people are on the premises nightly except Sundays, when a jukebox stocked with sixties rock and soul lights up. Monday, March 28, pianist **JOEL FORRESTER;** Tuesday, March 29, pianist Andy Tuck; Wednesday, March 30, the Roy Meriwether trio; Thursday, March 31, singer-guitarist **JOHN PIZZARELLI'S** trio; and Saturday, April 2, singer **CARLA WHITE,** with a quintet featuring tenor saxophonist **LEW TABACKIN.** Music from eight Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

Jan Wallman's, 49 W. 44th St. (764-8930)—A cozy room for singers and their followers, cheek by jowl with the Iroquois Hotel. The singers: Mondays, March 28 and April 4, **BOB STEWART;** Tuesday, March 29, and Saturday, April 2, Nancy Baxter; Wednesday and Thursday, March 30-31, Cynthia Adler; and Friday, April 1, and Tuesday, April 5, **BARBARA LEA.** Shows at nine and eleven. Dining. Closed Sundays.

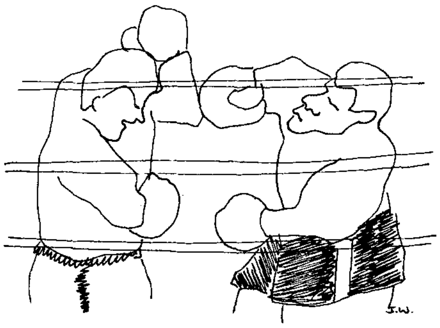
Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A busy corner bar and restaurant with a piano at the center of things. **ROLAND HANNA,** the youngest of the four great pianists to emerge from Detroit in the forties and fifties (Hank Jones, Tommy Flanagan, and Barry Harris are the others) and probably the most romantic of the bunch, works with bassist **STAFFORD JAMES** Tuesday through Friday, March 29-April 1. Pianist **HARRY CONNICK, JR.,** the latest good news from New Orleans, flies all by himself on Sundays and Mondays. Music from nine-thirty.

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—Probably the only place in town that features avant-garde jazz, advanced and intermediate rock, Easy Now medicinal tea, homemade yogurt, and smoothies. **RASHIED ALI,** John Coltrane's drummer during the Master's experimental late period, directs a quartet on Monday, March 28; Persian Gulf, a rock-and-roll band from Philadelphia, performs on Tuesday, March 29; alto saxophonists **TIM BERNE** and **JOHN ZORN** and bassist **MARK DRESSER** apply themselves to Ornette Coleman tunes on Wednesday and Thursday, March 30-31; and **CURLEW,** a downtown antic-jazz quintet, holds forth on Saturday, April 2. Activity from nine or so.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—This hangout for homesick Texans, French tourists, and local yokels brags that it's "*the biggest and best honky-tonk north of* Abilene." Big it ain't, but it does feature some genuine honky-tonk music, a souvenir stand, and TV monitors (which permit you to watch the action onstage in case your view of it is obscured by a cowboy or a structural element). The lineup: Tuesday, March 29, Humble Pie; Wednesday, March 30, Hot Tuna guitarist **JORMA KAUKONEN;** Thursday, March 31, the **ROLAND VAZQUEZ** band; and Friday and Saturday, April 1-2, **ROOMFUL OF BLUES,** a lively jump-blues band from Rhode Island. Music after nine. Hot vittles.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A mid-Manhattan pub for well-heeled gents and their high-heeled foxes. **RUTH BROWN,** an R. & B. star in the fifties and the R. & B. d.j. *Motormouth Maybell in John Waters' new* movie "Hairspray," sings Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Mikell's, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—A spiffy uptown bar and restaurant, with signed photographs of some swinging non-musicians on the walls (Reggie Jackson smiling shyly, Dave Winfield tuning up in the cage) and some heavy hitters on the bandstand. **ART BLAKEY,** who has lost little of his hard-bopper's drive and muscle while gaining on seventy, will be here with his youthful followers, the **JAZZ MESSENGERS,** on Friday and Saturday, April 1-2. Music from about ten until two.



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Red Blazer Too, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—A big, busy, theatre-district establishment *devoted to traditional jazz (big- and little-*band Swing, several varieties of Dixieland). Music from six on Sundays, from eight-thirty Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays.

Ritz, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Fifty years ago, people practiced the jitterbug and the foxtrot in this ballroom; today's patrons listen mainly to rock, which issues from speakers the size of mobile homes, and sometimes engage in a combination of exercise and intimacy known as slam dancing. **JOEY RAMONE,** one of punkdom's real gone guys, is hosting a show on Friday, April 1, which features the Rattlers, the Waldos, the Cycle Sluts from Hell, Debbie Harry, and others. The five British lads who call themselves *Flesh for Lulu perform on Saturday, April 2.* Shows begin at nine Sundays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays.

Siberia, 804 Washington St., near Horatio St. (463-7845)—A rock place, just a stone's throw from the Hudson. The foresighted arrive late (elevenish on school nights, midnight on weekends) and in a condition to understand what it is that the band White Zombie or the performance group Phred is trying to say to them. On Wednesday, March 30, when **BIG DIPPER** and Fish and Roses work out, the action begins at the exotic hour of eight. Big Dipper is an all-boys quartet from Boston; its songs are made of pleasant, almost lulling melodies and more poetry than you can shake a stick at. Dancing.

Sounds of Brazil, *204 Varick St., at W. Houston* St. (243-4940)—A big, cheerful room, painted a light tropical blue, where you can pick 'em up and set 'em down to sounds from Brazil, Africa, the Caribbean, and elsewhere. Ample seating for the contemplative. Tuesday, March 29, Ibrahima's World Beat, a fourteen-piece ensemble led by a Senegalese drummer and dancer; Wednesday and Thursday, March 30-31, the **BHUNDU BOYS,** a Zimbabwean pop band; Friday, April 1, Coupé Cloué, a Haitian band; Saturday, April 2, **MIKATA;** and Tuesday, April 5, Brazilian guitarist-singer **THIAGO DE MELLO.** Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays and from eleven on Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Speakeasy, 107 Macdougal St. (598-9670)—A central Village lounge for folkies and others who practice low-decibel (but not necessarily low-voltage) music. Dave Sear and Bill Staines perform on Friday, April Fool's Day, along with Bob Dylan and Blind Lemon Jefferson. **EARL ROBINSON,** the composer of folk operas, topical cantatas, and folk songs to whistle at work ("Joe Hill") and at school ("Black and White"), has the floor on Sunday, April 3. Shows nightly from about eight-thirty. Dining.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—The **JAZZTET,** a sextet created in the hard-bop fifties by Art Farmer and **BENNY GOLSON** and revived (after a twenty-year lapse) in the revivalist eighties, will be in this Village meetinghouse Tuesday through Sunday, March 29-April 3; **TERENCE BLANCHARD,** a young trumpeter from New Orleans, is sitting in for Farmer. **JAMES MOODY,** a saxophonist, flutist, and showman who did a couple of tours of duty with Dizzy Gillespie, brings in a band on Tuesday, April 5. **ART BLAKEY'S** youth corps holds forth on Monday, April 4. Shows from ten. Dining.

Tramps, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—"Irish" is what the canopy above the entrance to this bar says, but rock and roll is what the boys and girls in the back room mainly do. The **SURREAL MC COYS,** a local country-rock quintet, call this place home on Mondays. The other night, they did a Jim Reeves song, a couple of riding-down-the-highway-of-life numbers (one of which featured **KEVIN TRAINOR,** the band's singer and ringleader, playing careening slide guitar, using an old honky-tonk prop, a bottle of Bud, as a slide), "I Guess I Woke Up on the Right Side of the Wrong Bed Again" (a piece of Trainor whimsy that he called "a little Chinese folk song"), and a passionately declaimed song about the right to speak your mind in the U.S.A. The rest of the lineup: Tuesday, March 29, Em Zale; Wednesday, March 30, the Ned Sublette band; Friday, April 1, the World Famous Blue Jays and the Tall Lonesome Pines; and Saturday, April 2, West Coast bluesman Joe Louis Walker. Shows after (sometimes long after) nine-thirty.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—The gym-size downstairs room has Latin-jazz bands and their dancing fans on Mondays after nine-thirty. On March 28, piano thumpers **EDDIE PALMIERI** and **HILTON RUIZ** lead their ensembles, and another pianist, **HENRY BUTLER,** takes solo turns. Starting Tuesday, April 5, the **WORLD SAXOPHONE QUARTET** shares the stage with a brass band led by **LESTER BOWIE,** a trumpeter famous for his white lab jacket, his squawks and sighing half-valved effects, and his spirited parodies of old R. & B. songs. . . . ¶ One flight up, in the airy space known as the Terrace Bar, **JUNIOR MANCE** and **MARTY RIVERA** play piano-bass duets nightly, except Mondays. On Tuesdays, they trade sets with **HELLMAN'S ANGELS,** a string trio whose head angel, **DAPHNE HELLMAN,** plays the harp. Music from ten.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—People from all over the world descend the stairs to this ancient jazz club; many of them later emerge from it in an excited condition. **ILLINOIS JACQUET,** the Texas tenor man who is forty-some years older than he was when he was honking and wailing with Hampton and Basie and the Jazz-at-the-Philharmonic crowd, directs his fine sixteen-piece band Tuesday through Sunday, March 29-April 3; tenor saxophonist **JOHNNY GRIFFIN,** a fast and furious hard-bopper, moves *in with his quartet on Tuesday, April 5.* Mondays are prime time for the **MEL LEWIS** big band. Music from ten.

West End, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—The big room in this student rest stop (Columbia U. is across the street) has a non-institutional cafeteria, a bar that can seat a marching band, and a jukebox. The smaller room has tables, booths, a couple of hanging plants, and live jazz. **DAVID (FATHEAD) NEWMAN,** a blues-minded saxophonist best known for his work with Ray Charles, leads a quintet Wednesday through Sunday, March 30-April 3. On Mondays, comedians stand up and fall down. Shows from about nine.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—If you like pictures of cows, there's a good one here, by *the British painter Malcolm Morley, of some* Holsteins adrift in a Turneresque landscape. There's also jazz, which flows peaceably from a passageway between the front-room bar and the back-room restaurant. Pianist **JANE JARVIS** and bassist **MAJOR HOLLEY** work in tandem through Saturday, April 2; Sundays are in the nimble hands of guitarist **GENE BERTONCINI** and bassist **MICHAEL MOORE.** Music from eight nightly except Sundays, when it starts at seven.

JAZZ / ROCK / PERSONAL APPEARANCES / PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

WALTER THOMPSON BIG BAND—Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. Tuesday, March 29, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.

COMPOSERS' SHOWCASE—With Freddie Hubbard, the Mingus Dynasty Band, and Sun Ra. (Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911. Thursday, March 31, at 8.)

JOHN KELLY—Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Thursday through Saturday, March 31-April 2, and Wednesday, April 6, at 8, and Sunday, April 3, at 3. Through Sunday, April 17.

DAVID SYLVIAN—Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Friday, April 1, at 8.

MARTY POTTENGER—Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. 925-4671. Friday through Sunday, April 1-3, at 8:30.

SILLY WIZARD—Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Saturday, April 2, at 8.

WOMEN IN REGGAE AND CALYPSO—With Denyse Plummer, Natasha Wilson, Carlene Davis, Calypso Rose, and others. (Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden. 563-8000. Saturday, April 2, at 8:30.)

TOM JONES—Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 757-3100. Saturday and Sunday, April 2-3, at 8.

USHIO TORIKAI—Dance Theatre Workshop. Monday and Tuesday, April 4-5, at 8.

BEACON THEATRE—Tuesday, March 29, at 8: The Kinks. . . . ¶ Wednesday, March 30, at 8: Terence Trent D'Arby. . . . ¶ Thursday, March 31, at 8: Robyn Hitchcock & the Egyptians and the Feelies. . . . ¶ Saturday, April 2, at 7:30: The Mighty Sparrow, Arrow, and others. (Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070.)

P.S. 122—Friday, April 1, at 10, and Saturday and Sunday, April 2-3, at 8: "The Jazz Section," with Dan Froot and Dan Hurlin. . . . ¶ Thursday through Sunday, March 31-April 3, at 9: Merian Soto and others. (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

JOSEF ALBERS (1888-1976)—Nine paintings from his "Homage to the Square" series. Through April 30. (Schlesinger-Boisanté, 822 Madison Ave., at 69th St. A retrospective of the artist's work is at the Guggenheim Museum.)

FANNY BRENNAN—Very small surreal paintings. Through Saturday, April 2. (Coe Kerr, 49 E. 82nd St. Open Mondays.)

MARY FAULCONER—More than fifty small tempera paintings of, for example, Charlie Chaplin's sitting room and Katharine Hepburn's town house. Through April 16. (Schiller-Wapner, 1 E. 61st St.)

ANTHONY GREEN AND MARY COZENS-WALKER—Autobiographical paintings and drawings by Mr. Green, including portraits of himself and Ms. Cozens-Walker (they are husband and wife), who is exhibiting sculptures in mixed mediums. Through April 30. (Staempfli, 47 E. 77th St.)

DIMITRY MERINOFF (1896-1971)—Five works in mixed mediums. Through April 29. (Uddoh, 233 E. 84th St. Open until 7.)

KIKUO SAITO / MARK DAVIS—Color-field paintings. / Still-life paintings and drawings. Through Friday, April 1. (Salander-O'Reilly, 22 E. 80th St. Open Mondays.)

HUNT SLONEM—Grisaille paintings housed in old gilt frames and depicting groups of tropical birds and animals. Through Saturday, April 2. (McCoy, 19 E. 71st St.)

JOAN SNYDER—Recent paintings, among them the twenty-four-foot-long "Morning Requiem (For the Children)," which includes velvet, papier-mâché, and wire. Through April 16. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

PAT STEIR—New paintings. Through Thursday, March 31. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

BOB THOMPSON (1937-66)—Figurative paintings. Through April 9. (Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St.)

CHARLES WELLS—Angels carved in wood, and other sculptures. Through April 16. (Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **BABCOCK,** 20 E. 67th St.: A selection of nineteenth-century American paintings, including works by Arthur B. Davies, Asher B. Durand, and Louis Eilshemius. Through April 30. (Closes at 4 on Saturdays.) . . . **BERNARD,** 33 E. 74th St.: Fifty-one paintings and drawings that shed new light on the phrase "starving artist." The show is titled "The Artist's Palate," and Francis Bacon's "Side of Beef" and David Hockney's "Strawberry Cake" are on the menu. Through April 9. . . . **SPANISH INSTITUTE,** 684 Park Ave., at 68th St.: Fifty-three miniature portraits on copper and vellum by Spanish artists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Through April 23. (Open Mondays.)

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

MILET ANDREJEVIC—Allegorical paintings in which Greek gods mingle with habitués of Central Park. Through Wednesday, March 30. (Schoelkopf, 50 W. 57th St.)

ARMAN—Thirteen paintings to which the artist has affixed a great number of paintbrushes. Through April 9. (Marisa del Re, 41 E. 57th St.)

GEORGE BELLOWS (1882-1925)—Nearly a hundred lithographs. Through Saturday, April 2. (Associated American Artists, 20 W. 57th St.)

JAKE BERTHOT—New abstract paintings. Through Wednesday, March 30. (McKee, 41 E. 57th St.)

JACK BUSH (1909-77)—A retrospective of paintings and works on paper. Through Saturday, April 2. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

GEORGE CONDO—Paintings and drawings. Through Saturday, April 2. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

ROBERT COURTRIGHT—Terra-cotta works: stelae with shallow carvings, and pigmented masks. Through April 16. (Gimpel, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

ELIZABETH DE CUEVAS / ROBERTO CORTAZAR—Fourteen sculptures. / Paintings. Through April 16. (Kerr, 37 W. 57th St.)

GONZALO FONSECA—Sculptures, many of which incorporate limestone the artist recycled from demolished New York buildings. Through April 30. (Herstand, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

GÜNTHER FÖRG—An abstractionist who uses painted or cast metal as his canvases. Through Saturday, April 2. (Luhring Augustine & Hodes, 41 E. 57th St.)

LEON GOLDIN—Abstract paintings, not as strictly geometric as some of his past work. Through April 14. (Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

ROBERT GREENE / ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE—Landscape paintings. / Dye-transfer prints of still-lifes and figures. Through April 23. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

MICHEL HAAS—Drawings characterized by figures shaded against a blizzard of short marks. Through April 9. (Krugier, 41 E. 57th St.)

BILL JENSEN—Recent paintings. Through May 7. (Washburn, 41 E. 57th St.)

GRANDMA MOSES (1860-1961)—Paintings of spring, summer, winter, and fall. Through April 16. (Hammer, 33 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

MERET OPPENHEIM (1913-86)—Paintings, mostly. Through April 9. (Kent, 41 E. 57th St.)

MARTIN SILVERMAN—Large-scale clothed dolls sitting in boats or on trunks, in an installation that reminisces about our immigrant ancestors. Through Wednesday, March 30. (Ruth Siegel, 24 W. 57th St.)

JANET STAYTON AND ROBERT JANZ—Paintings. Through April 23. (Heesy, 50 W. 57th St.)

WILLIAM TURNBULL—Recent bronze sculptures. Through Saturday, April 2. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

GER VAN ELK—Painted still-life photographs set in severely angled constructions; the title of one work, "Rietfruitveld," refers to the De Stijl architect Gerrit Rietveld. Through Friday, April 1. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

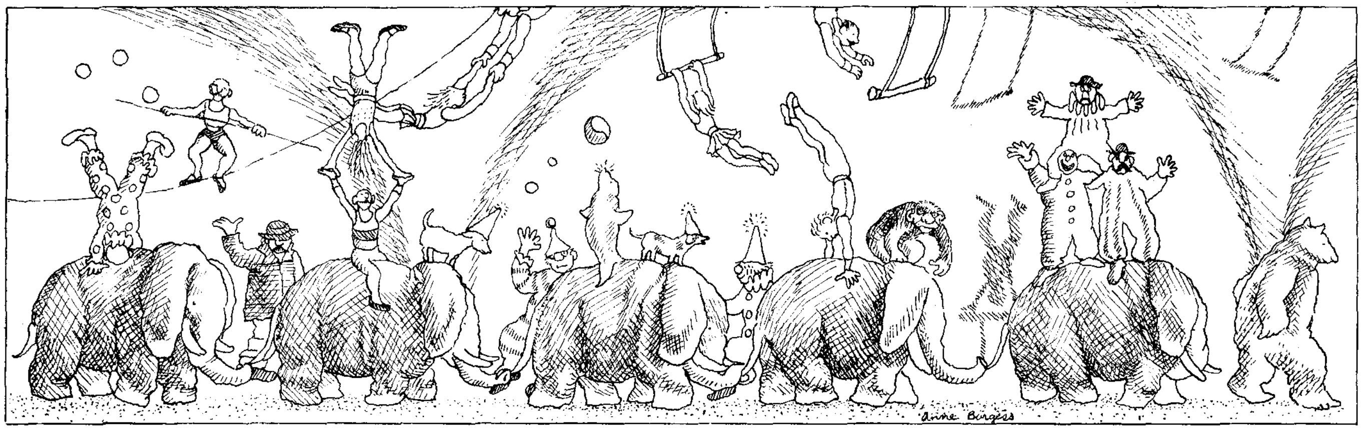
PAULE VÉZELAY (1892-1984)—Nonobjective works on paper and minimalist wire-and-thread constructions. Through Saturday, April 2. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

JANE WILSON / POLLY KRAFT—Land- and seascapes. / Still-lifes. Through Wednesday, March 30. (Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St.)

PHILIP WOFFORD / LUIS CRUZ AZACETA—Densely painted abstractions. / Drawings. Through Saturday, April 2. (Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St.)

ALBERT YORK—Landscape, still-life, and figure paintings from the past twenty-five years. Through April 9. (Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **GALERIE LELONG,** 20 W. 57th St.: Sculptures, drawings, and photographs by Gordon Matta-Clark (1945-78) and a number of artists in his circle. Through April 16. . . . **MIDTOWN,** 11 E. 57th St.: Studies and paintings for WPA-sponsored murals. Artists include Isabel Bishop, Paul Cadmus, and Ben Shahn. Through April 9. . . . **HOLLY**



SOLOMON, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.: Painters who camouflage their references—Nam June Paik superimposes Chinese calligraphy over video images; Richard Phillips reduces furniture to two-dimensional leather-and-metal constructions. Also, work by Kim MacConnel and Andy Warhol. Through April 23. (Open Mondays.) . . . **DEUTSCH,** 20 W. 57th St.: Paintings and drawings of American towns and cities by American artists working in the first half of this century, among them Ralston Crawford, Alice Neel, and Charles Burchfield. Through April 27.

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GALLERIES—SoHo

HANNO AHRENS—Wood-and-plaster sculptures. Through May 7. (Sharpe, 152 Wooster St.)

WILLIAM ANASTASI—The artist wore a blindfold or simply averted his eyes when he made these large-scale paintings and works on paper. Through April 16. (Cutler, 164 Mercer St.)

RICHARD ANUSZKIEWICZ—A retrospective of wood constructions and paintings. Through April 16. (Green, 152 Wooster St.)

ASHLEY BICKERTON—Wall constructions that all bear the motto "Culturelux: The Best in Sensory and Intellectual Experiences." Through Saturday, April 2. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

PAUL BOWEN—Wood constructions. Through April 16. (Shainman, 560 Broadway.)

SANDRO CHIA—Paintings and drawings from the past ten years. Through Tuesday, April 5. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

CHRYSSA—Metal wall constructions, most of which incorporate neon lighting. Through April 16. (Castelli, 142 Greene St.)

DOMINIC CRETARA—Paintings of figures in dramatic encounters; for instance, a scene in a confession box, with the penitent's fantasy occupying the top section of the canvas. Through Thursday, March 31. (McNeil, 96 Greene St.)

ELBA DAMAST / LARRY HOLMES—A retrospective of paintings and works on paper. / Pastels. Through Saturday, April 2. (Littlejohn-Smith, 133 Greene St.)

RAFAEL FERRER—Paintings of genre scenes in Santo Domingo, where the artist lives about half the year. Through Wednesday, April 6. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

CRISTOS GIANAKOS—A very large ramp framework made of wood, steel, and glass. Also, abstract paintings on Mylar. Through Saturday, April 2. (Siegeltuch, 568 Broadway, entrance on Prince St.)

JEFF GOMPERTZ—Paintings of imaginary objects, such as a weapon of the future. Through Saturday, April 2. (Plumb, 81 Greene St.)

DENISE GREEN—Oil paintings and lithographs. Through April 13. (Viafora, 568 Broadway.)

BARBARA GROSSMAN—Recent paintings. Through April 13. (Bowery, 121 Wooster St. Opens daily, except Mondays, at noon.)

DUNCAN HANNAH—Recent paintings. Through Wednesday, April 6. (Kind, 136 Greene St.)

JAN HASHEY—Abstract portraits and still-lifes in pastel and oil. Through April 16. (Toll, 146 Greene St.)

JOHN HEJDUK—Colored-pencil drawings of an imaginary town. Through April 9. (Protetch, 560 Broadway.)

CLINTON HILL—Constructions and assemblages made of overlapping parts of either handmade paper or painted wood. Through April 7. (Pearl, 420 West Broadway.)

DAVID IRELAND—An installation. Through April 16. (Brandt, 568 Broadway.)

MARK KOSTABI—Paintings and figurative bronze sculptures. Through April 16. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St.)

JUNE LEAF—Recent paintings. Through April 16. (Thorp, 103 Prince St.)

NIKI LOGIS—A large painted-steel structure that viewers can sit in, stand on, or just lean against; smaller works are also included. Through April 23. (Allen, 560 Broadway.)

CHARLES LUCE / PAUL CARANICAS—An installation. / Landscapes juxtaposed with paintings of demolished artillery bunkers and other military structures from the world wars. Through Wednesday, March 30. (Schreiber-Cutler, 171 Spring St.)

GERALD MARCUS—Paintings and drawings. Through April 13. (Prince Street Gallery, 121 Wooster St. Opens daily, except Mondays, at noon.)

CLEMENT MEADMORE—Recent sculptures. Through Saturday, April 2. (Ingber, 415 West Broadway.)

ANNETTE OKO / SONIA DELAUNAY (1885-1979)—Photo-Realist paintings. / Color lithographs. Through April 30. (Zarre, 379 West Broadway.)

FRANC PALAIA—The "Berlin Wall Series," consisting of hand-painted photographs and what looks like a fragment of the wall, is presented as though it were documentary evidence in a twenty-first-century exhibit. Through April 15. (Schulte, 565 Broadway.)

JOYCE ROBINS / ROBERT SUSSMAN—Rough-textured freestanding geometric bronzes. / Nonobjective paintings. Through Saturday, April 2. (55 Mercer Street Gallery.)

TIM ROLLINS—Eighty framed pages from the first chapter of Kafka's "Amerika," embellished with gold watercolors; a stack of Bibles too high to swear on; and other literary-minded works. Eighteen young students from the South Bronx assisted the artist. Through Saturday, April 2. (Gorney, 100 Greene St.)

GEORGES ROUSSE—A series of large Cibachromes depicting various empty rooms, the walls of which the artist painted red. Through Saturday, April 2. (Cadot, 470 Broome St.)

DAVID SALLE—Recent paintings. Through Saturday, April 2. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

MIRIAM SCHAPIRO—Figurative paintings. The central work shows three dancers dressed from top hat to tap shoes in multipatterned fabric collage. Through April 12. (Steinbaum, 132 Greene St.)

JOEL SHAPIRO—Works on paper. Through Thursday, March 31. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

SANDI SLONE—Abstract paintings with a gritty texture. Through Saturday, April 2. (Stephen Rosenberg, 115 Wooster St.)

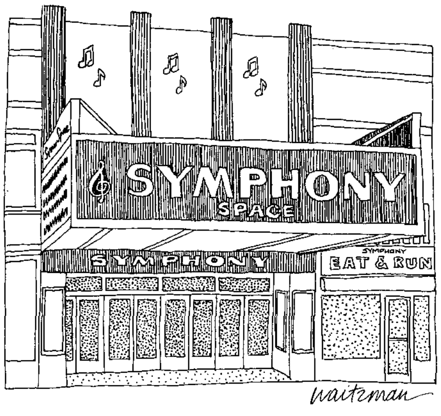
URSULA VON RYDINGSVÄRD—Large-scale sculptures carved in cedar. Through April 30. (Exit Art, 578 Broadway.)

STEPHEN WHISLER—Sculptures. Through April 16. (Lang & O'Hara, 568 Broadway.)

ROBIN WINTERS—Works on paper dating from 1973 to the present. Through April 9. (Alexander, 59 Wooster St.)

JOAN WITEK—Abstract paintings characterized by a liberal use of white and pale blue. Through April 23. (Davis, 568 Broadway.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **BRYERS,** 111 Greene St.: A selection of paintings, sculptures, and works on paper which has something to say about the color white; included are works by Donald Lipski, Jasper Johns, and James Hyde. Through April 16. . . . **49TH PARALLEL,** 420 West Broadway: Somewhat didactic Canadian and American art that claims to "reactivate" the everyday object. Louise Lawler's Cibachrome prints and Bernie Miller's futuristic installation with found objects are included in this exhibition, part of which was originally mounted at the Power Plant, in Toronto. Through April 19. . . . **MUNROE,** 415 West Broadway: Abstract paintings and works on paper by Elizabeth Dworkin, Katherine Bradford, Jean Feinberg, and Laura Newman. Through Saturday, April 2.



SCULPTURE—Works by a dozen women artists in a show entitled "The Decline of Sexual Stereotypes in Post-Feminist Sculpture." Through Saturday, April 2. (A.I.R., 63 Crosby St.)

OTHER GALLERIES

POLLY APFELBAUM—Minimalist wood sculptures and drawings. Through April 24. (Loughelton, 19 Second Ave., at 1st St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

RICHARD BOGART—Romantic landscapes. Through Saturday, April 2. (Natkin, 395 Broadway.)

BRETT DE PALMA—Twelve figures from Greek and Roman mythology painted on tin. Through Thursday, March 31. (Briet, 377 Broome St., between Mott and Mulberry Sts. Open Sundays.) . . . ¶ Assemblages. Through April 16. (Fawbush, 568 Broadway.)

DAVID DIAO—New paintings. Through April 10. (Postmasters, 66 Avenue A, near 4th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

RODNEY ALAN GREENBLAT—Relief paintings depicting the artist's cartoonish characters on various madcap adventures. Through Sunday, April 3. (Gracie Mansion Gallery, 167 Avenue A, at 10th St. Opens daily, except Mondays, at noon.)

JENE HIGHSTEIN—Three six-to-seven-foot-tall elm wood carvings, plus works on paper. Through April 30. (Klein, 611 Broadway.)

SUSAN HILLER—Two installations, one of which is audiovisual. Through April 17. (Hearn, 735 E. 9th St., just west of Avenue D. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.)

MARK SCHWARTZ—Abstract Expressionist paintings. Through April 9. (Baum, 109 Hudson St. Open Mondays.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

TOM BARIL AND SUZANNE WILLIAMSON—Black-and-white photographs. Through May 7. (Ledel, 168 Mercer St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Saturdays.)

CECIL BEATON (1904-80)—A two-gallery retrospective of works by the fashion and celebrity photographer. Through April 23. (Fashion Institute of Technology, Shirley Goodman Resource Center, Seventh Ave. at 27th St. Open Tuesday evenings until 9. . . . ¶ Grey Art Gallery, New York University, 33 Washington Pl. Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 to 6:30; Wednesdays, 10 to 8:30; Fridays, 10 to 5; and Saturdays, 1 to 5.)

MARGARET BOURKE-WHITE (1904-71)—A retrospective of works by the photojournalist who did *Life's* first cover. Through May 1. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

BRASSAÏ (1899-1984)—Thirty-three photographs documenting Picasso and his environs from 1932 to 1944; the work is on loan from the Musée Picasso, in Paris. Through April 23. (French Institute–Alliance Française, 22 E. 60th St. Mondays through Fridays, noon to 6; Saturdays, 10 to 4.)

WILLIAM CHRISTENBERRY / LOUIS DE CLERQ (1836-1901)—New abstract photographs, plus sculptures and drawings. / Photographs of architectural monuments. Through April 23. (Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St.)

GRACE KNOWLTON—Photographs, including hand-painted prints of the artist's outdoor sculptures. Through Saturday, April 2. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

LUCAS SAMARAS—Photographs. Through April 30. (Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. Opens at noon.)

JOYCE TENNESON / HOLLY WRIGHT—Pale, misty photographs with nudes as the subjects. / A

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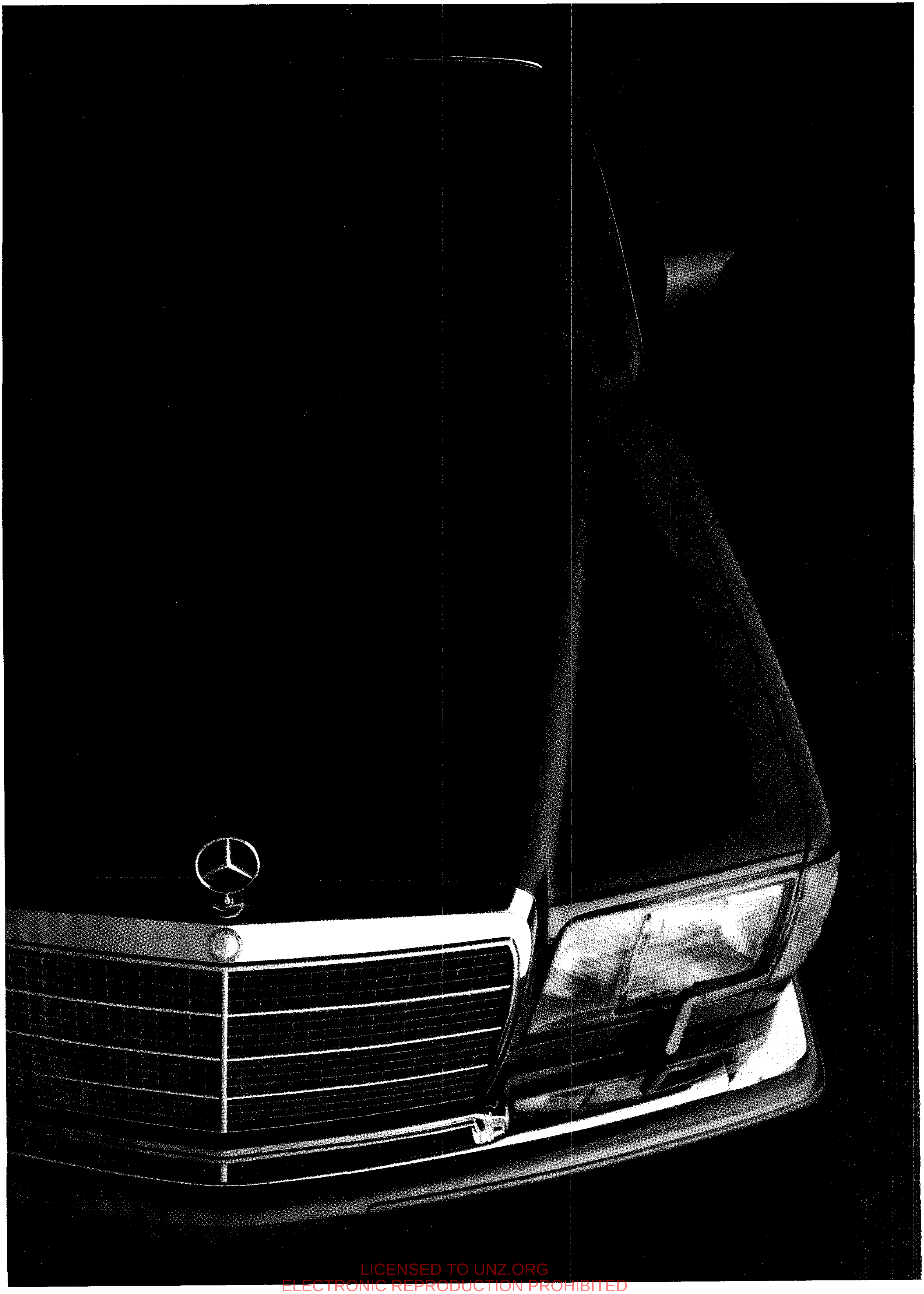

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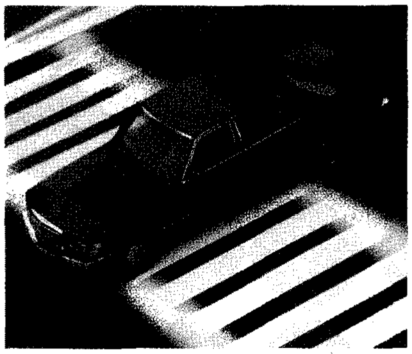
The most revealing test of an exotic high-performance luxury sedan is not the racetrack or the skidpad but day-in, day-out reality. Which for some disillusioned owners can end up being all too exasperatingly real.



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Your choice of S-Class sedans ranges from the 560 SEL and 420 SEL V-8s to the new six-cylinder 300 SEL and 300 SE. Each blends high performance with the most civilized comfort on wheels. But the greatest comfort of the Mercedes-Benz S-Class may ultimately be a purely emotional one: the absolute reassurance of absolute integrity.

Engineered like no other car in the world

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This factory floor in Ft. Worth, Texas, is almost a full mile long. B-24 Liberators rolled off the line here, then flew off to help roll back the Axis advance in World War II.

Today, we build the F-16 Fighting Falcon here. The Air Force rates it the highest-quality tactical fighter in the world.

We are proud of this plant.

We are proud of our plane.

But we are most proud of our people.

See those American flags? There's over a mile of them.

We didn't think of putting them there. Our people did.

They created their own fund—and donated their own money—to help do it.

Perhaps the flags help our people create the kind of environment they want to work *in* by reminding them what they are working *for.*

They are proud of the plant. And are proud of our planes, too.

But they are most proud of our country.

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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series of photographs entitled "The Flesh." Through April 14. (Pfeifer, 568 Broadway.)

Arthur Tress—Photographs. Through April 16. (Twining, 568 Broadway.)

James Welling—Polaroid photographs. Through April 16. (Burgin, 270 Lafayette St.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—Among the fifty-one Dutch and Flemish paintings on loan from the Hermitage are Rembrandt's "Sacrifice of Isaac," Hals' "Young Man Holding a Glove," and van Dyck's "Family Portrait." Through June 5. . . . ¶ A show of Fragonard paintings and drawings, which has travelled here from the Grand Palais, in Paris. Through May 8. Complementing this is the display of "The Progress of Love" at the Frick Collection (see below). (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—An exhibit of three reconstructed outdoor installations by Vito Acconci that are meant to be climbed through, sat on, whatever. One of them uses a half-dozen formerly abandoned cars. Through May 3. . . . ¶ Drawings by Paul Cézanne taken from five sketchbooks that are on loan from the Kunstmuseum, in Basel. Through June 5. . . . ¶ A show of prints scanning the political and social views of more than a hundred artists working in this country during the past twenty-five years, among them Miriam Schapiro, Jane Dickson, Romare Bearden, and Hans Haacke. Through April 19. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A show that tracks collage and assemblage as explored by exponents of every ism from Cubism to Abstract Expressionism and beyond. The works are by Picasso, Duchamp, Ernst, Chamberlain, Rauschenberg, Nevelson, and Anne Ryan, among many others. Starts Tuesday, March 29, at noon. . . . ¶ A large retrospective of Josef Albers' work includes paintings, objects, and photographs. Through May 29. A complementary show is at Gallery Schlesinger-Boisanté, 822 Madison Ave., at 69th St. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 7:45, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, *Madison* Ave. at 75th St.—An exhibit of Richard Artschwager's paintings and sculptures from the past twenty-five years. *Through* Sunday, April 3. . . . ¶ A Charles Sheeler retrospective offering paintings, drawings, and photographs. Through April 17. *(Open daily except Mondays.* Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, *noon to 6.)*

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—A selection of twenty-five paintings by American artists, representing the works acquired for the museum during the tenure of John I. H. Baur, who was a curator from 1936 to 1952. *Through June 20.* . . . ¶ A survey of prints by Alex Katz. Through April 11. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—Artifacts from Carthage, including seventeen pictorial mosaics. Through May 1. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—A survey of present-day Scandinavian crafts comprising the work of thirty-five artisans. Through April 24. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—A show of ancient terra-cotta objects—toys, fertility figures, reliefs—*from South and Southeast* Asia. Through May 8. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—A display of Swedish silver covering a *three-hundred-and-fifty-year* period and including flatware that graced the tables of King Karl Johan and Queen Desideria, Prince Gustav Adolf and Princess Sybilla, and King Carl and Queen Silvia. Through June 5. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—All fourteen canvases of Fragonard's "The Progress of Love" are on view *(as usual), complementing* the comprehensive show of the artist's work at the Metropolitan. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays *through* Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—An exhibit of works by Leonid Pasternak (1862-1945), the Russian Impressionist painter and the father of Boris Pasternak. Genre scenes, landscapes, still-lifes, and portraits (of, for instance, Lenin, Tolstoy, and Einstein). Through May 22. (Open daily except Fridays, Saturdays, and Sunday, April 3. Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, except April 3, from 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—The Drake Manuscript consists of two hundred captioned watercolors of life in the West Indies, thought to be the work of someone on the voyages of Sir Francis Drake. The manuscript is on view along with transparencies of the individual pages. Through May 1. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—Bird prints in the library's collection, organized chronologically (1550-1900) and selected so as to show a range both of birds and of print techniques. Through May 7. (Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 5:45.)

Schomburg Center, *515* Lenox Ave., at *135th* St.—Paintings, sculptures, photographs, and other works of art by forty-two black artists *who live or work in Harlem. Through April* 16. (Open Mondays through Wednesdays, noon to 8; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 *to 6.)*

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—Photographs by Richard S. Roberts documenting black middle-class life in South Carolina in the twenties and thirties. Through Sunday, April 3. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

MUSIC

(The box-office number for Alice Tully Hall is 362-1911; *for* Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; *for* Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall, 247-7800; *and for* Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

Eve Olitsky

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—*Monday*, March *28*, at 8: "Les Contes d'Hoffmann," with Gail Dobish, Roberta Alexander, Martine Dupuy, Placido Domingo, and Simon Estes; conducted by Charles Dutoit. . . . ¶ Tuesday, March 29, at 8: "Lulu," with Catherine Malfitano, Tatiana Troyanos, Ronald Hamilton, and Franz Mazura; James Levine. . . . ¶ Wednesday, March 30, at 8: "Werther," with Frederica von Stade, Dawn Upshaw, Alfredo Kraus, and Richard Stilwell; Jean Fournet. . . . ¶ Thursday, March 31, at 8: "Così Fan Tutte," with Kiri Te Kanawa, Diana Montague, David Rendall, and Håkan Hagegård; James Levine. . . . ¶ Friday, April 1, at 8: "Il Trovatore," with Leona Mitchell, Fiorenza Cossotto, James McCracken, and Leo Nucci; Gianluigi Gelmetti. . . . ¶ Saturday, April 2, at 2: "Lulu," with Catherine Malfitano, Tatiana Troyanos, Ronald Hamilton, and Franz Mazura; James Levine. . . . ¶ Saturday, April 2, at 8: "Werther," with Frederica von Stade, Dawn Upshaw, Alfredo Kraus, and Richard Stilwell; Jean Fournet. . . . ¶ Monday, April 4, at 8: "Così Fan Tutte," with Kiri Te Kanawa, Diana Montague, David Rendall, and Håkan Hagegård; James Levine. . . . ¶ Tuesday, April 5, at 8: "Werther," with Frederica von Stade, Betsy Norden, Alfredo Kraus, and Richard Stilwell; Jean Fournet. . . . ¶ Wednesday, April 6, at 8: "Il Trovatore," with Leona Mitchell, Fiorenza Cossotto, James McCracken, and Leo Nucci; Michelangelo Veltri. (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

Opera Orchestra of New York—Eve Queler directing Janáček's "Jenůfa," with Gabriela Beňačková and Leonie Rysanek, sopranos, and Peter Kazaras and Wieslaw Ochman, tenors. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, March 30, at 8.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall. Tuesday, March 29, at 8: Gennady Rozhdestvensky conducting a nonsubscription concert, with Viktoria Postnikova, piano. . . . ¶ Thursday, March 31, at 8; Friday, April 1, at 2; Saturday, April 2, at 8; and Tuesday, April 5, at 7:30: James Conlon conducting a Webern-Berg-Dvořák program, with Young-Uck Kim, violin.

Clarion Concerts Orchestra—Newell Jenkins conducting, with Jaap Schröder, violin. (Merkin Concert Hall. Tuesday, March 29, at 8.)

Orchestra of St. Luke's—Richard Bonynge conducting, with Joan Sutherland, soprano. *(*Avery Fisher Hall. *Sunday, April 3,* at *7:30.)*

National Chorale—Martin Josman directing Bach's Mass in B Minor. With Ann Monoyios, soprano; D'Anna Fortunato, mezzo-soprano; Jeffrey Dooley, alto; Robert Guarino, tenor; John Ostendorf, bass; and an orchestra. (Avery Fisher Hall. Wednesday, March 30, at 7:30.)

RECITALS

James Levine and Ken Noda—Duo piano, and piano four hands, in an all-Schubert program. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Monday, March 28, at 8.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—Presenting a Beethoven-Chopin-Mendelssohn program, with Jean-Yves Thibaudet, piano, and artists of the society. (Alice Tully Hall. Tuesday, March 29, at 7:30.)

Alan Marks—Piano. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Tuesday, March 29, at 8.)

Annie Fischer—Piano, in a Beethoven-Schubert-Brahms program. (Carnegie Hall. Tuesday, March 29, at 8.)

Juilliard String Quartet—Chamber music. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Tuesday, March 29, at 8. For information about tickets, call 874-7515.). . . ¶ Playing the two Brahms sextets, with Walter Trampler, viola, and Ralph Kirshbaum, cello. (Carnegie Hall. Tuesday, April 5, at 8.)

S.E.M. Ensemble—Performing Morton Feldman's "For Philip Guston," a piece that lasts about four hours and fifteen minutes (with no break). (Paula Cooper Gallery, 155 Wooster St. Tuesday, March 29, at 9. For information about tickets, call 674-0766.)

Trio Musica Hispana—In a program of Latin-American and Spanish music. (Weill Recital Hall. Wednesday, March 30, at 8.)

Vladimir Feltsman—Piano, in a benefit concert. With Alexandre Brussilovsky, violin. (Stephen Wise Free Synagogue, 30 W. 68th St. Wednesday, March 30, at 8. For information about tickets, call 679-6122.)

Alberto Reyes—Piano. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Thursday, March 31, at 8.)

Spoleto Festival Chamber Music at BAM—With Joshua Bell, violin; Scott Nickrenz, viola; Carter Brey, cello; and Jeffrey Kahane, piano. The sixth of seven concerts. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Saturday, April 2, at 8.)

New School Concerts—A string-quartet version of Haydn's "Seven Last Words of Christ," performed by Alexander Schneider and Isidore Cohen, violin; Steven Tenenbom, viola; Laurence Lesser, cello; and Schuyler Chapin, who will narrate his own text. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. Sunday, April 3, at 2. For information about tickets, call 741-5689.)

Heinz Holliger and Christiane Jaccottet—Oboe and harpsichord. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Monday, April 4, at 8.)

Lucy Shelton—Soprano, with Nancy Allen, harp, and eight cellists. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. Monday, April 4, at 8.)

Composers Concordance—Contemporary chamber music. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. Monday, April 4, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Katherine Ciesinski and Daniel Blumenthal—Mezzo-soprano and piano, in a program of early-twentieth-century works by Russian Jewish composers. (Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. Tuesday, April 5, at 7. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Marvis Martin—Soprano. (Alice Tully Hall. Tuesday, April 5, at 8.)

Nina Tichman—Piano, in the last of her three-concert series of all Debussy's piano works. (Merkin Concert Hall. Tuesday, April 5, at 8.)

André Watts—Piano. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, April 6, at 8.)

Jean-Pierre Rampal—Flute. (Avery Fisher Hall. Wednesday, April 6, at 8.)

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Audubon String Quartet—With Joe Kennedy, Jr., jazz violinist. (Merkin Concert Hall. Wednesday, April 6, at 8.)

SPORTS

(The ticket-information number for Madison Square Garden is 563-8300, for the Meadowlands 1-201 935-3900, for Nassau Coliseum 1-516 587-9222, and for Yankee Stadium 293-6000.)

Baseball—First American League games at Yankee Stadium—Yankees vs. Minnesota, Tuesday and Wednesday, April 5-6, at 1.

Basketball—At **madison square garden:** Knicks vs. Dallas Mavericks, Monday, March 28, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Houston Rockets, Saturday, April 2, at 8:30. . . . **byrne meadowlands arena:** Nets vs. Boston Celtics, Monday, March 28, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Washington Bullets, Sunday, April 3, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Detroit Pistons, Tuesday, April 5, at 7:30.

Hockey—At **byrne meadowlands arena:** Devils vs. Pittsburgh Penguins, Tuesday, March 29, at 7:45. . . . ¶ Devils vs. Islanders, Saturday, April 2, at 1:35. . . . **nassau coliseum:** Islanders vs. Philadelphia Flyers, Tuesday, March 29, at 8:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Washington Capitals, Thursday, March 31, at 8:05. . . . **madison square garden:** Rangers vs. Quebec Nordiques, Sunday, April 3, at 7:35.

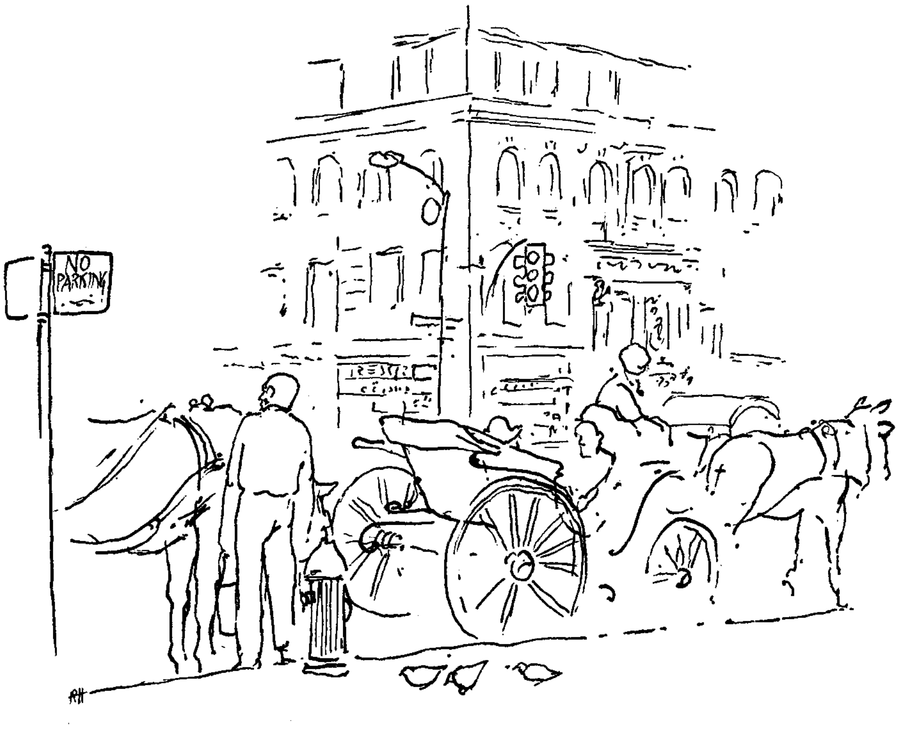
Racing—At Aqueduct: Weekdays, except Tuesday, April 5, at 1; through Monday, May 9.

Trotting—At **meadowlands:** Weeknights at 7:30. . . . **yonkers raceway:** Nightly, except Sunday, April 3, at 8; through Tuesday, May 3.

ET ALIA

Prose Readings—Diane Venora, Lois Smith, Isaiah Sheffer, and Joanna Gleason reading from the stories of Susan Minot, Elizabeth Jolley, James Thurber, and Ursula K. Le Guin. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Wednesday, March 30, at 6:30.) . . . ¶ Mario Vargas Llosa reading from his own works, in Spanish, with English translations read by Cordelia Gonzales (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Monday, April 4, at 8.) . . . ¶ Elizabeth Hardwick reading from her own works. (Donnell Library, 20 W. 53rd St. Tuesday, April 5, at 6. No tickets necessary.)

Daylight Saving Time—Starts Sunday, April 3, at 2 A.M. Clocks should be turned ahead an hour.



COMING EVENTS

(A listing for forehanded readers.)

Baseball—First National League games at Shea Stadium: Mets vs. Montreal, April 12 and 14 (both day games).

Racing—The Kentucky Derby. (Churchill Downs, Louisville, Ky. May 7.)

Running—Boston Marathon. (Starts at Hopkinton, Mass. April 18.)

Tennis—Eagle Tournament of Champions. (West Side Tennis Club, Forest Hills. May 2-8.)

Music—**metropolitan opera** (362-6000): The season continues through April 16. . . . **avery fisher hall** (874-2424): The New York Philharmonic season continues through May 27. . . . ¶ Alicia de Larrocha, April 10. . . . ¶ Masterworks Chorus, April 11, and May 2 and 8. . . . ¶ City of Birmingham Orchestra, April 15. . . . ¶ I Musici, April 17. . . . ¶ Musica Sacra Chorus and Orchestra, April 20. . . . ¶ Boston Symphony, April 29. . . . ¶ Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, May 1. . . . **carnegie hall** (247-7800): Marilyn Horne, April 9. . . . ¶ American Symphony Orchestra, April 10. . . . ¶ Alfred Brendel, April 11 and 18. . . . ¶ Philadelphia Orchestra, with Peter Serkin, April 12. . . . ¶ City of Birmingham Orchestra, with Alfred Brendel, April 13. . . . ¶ Orchestra of St. Luke's, April 15. . . . ¶ Monte Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra, April 17. . . . ¶ Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, with the Guarneri Quartet, April 21. . . . ¶ Emanuel Ax, April 22. . . . ¶ Minnesota Orchestra, with Kathleen Battle, April 23. . . . ¶ American Composers Orchestra, April 24. . . . ¶ Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, April 25. . . . ¶ Boston Symphony, April 27-28. . . . ¶ Ridge String Quartet, May 1. . . . ¶ Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, May 2. . . . ¶ Oratorio Society of New York, with Janet Baker, May 4. . . . **alice tully hall** (362-1911): Kathleen Battle, April 10. . . . ¶ Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, April 15-17, 24, and 26. . . . ¶ Matt Hamowitz, April 17. . . . ¶ Trevor Pinnock, April 18. . . . ¶ Beethoven Society, April 23. . . . ¶ Peter Serkin, April 24. . . . ¶ Guarneri Quartet, April 27. . . . ¶ Barbara Hendricks, May 1. . . . ¶ Music from Marlboro, May 2. . . . **92nd street y** (427-4410): Richard Goode, April 10. . . . ¶ New York Chamber Symphony, April 16-17. . . . ¶ Sherrill Milnes, April 20. . . . ¶ Elmar Oliveira, April 30. . . . ¶ Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio, May 3-4. . . . **grace rainey rogers auditorium,** Metropolitan Museum (570-3949): Emerson String Quartet, April 9. . . . ¶ Guarneri Quartet, April 16. . . . ¶ Tokyo String Quartet, with Hiroko Nakamura, April 18. . . . ¶ Music from Marlboro, April 28. . . . ¶ Beaux Arts Trio, April 29-30.

Theatre—Some productions scheduled to open during the next several weeks: "Mail," a musical with a book and lyrics by Jerry Colker and a score by Michael Rupert, who also has the lead role. . . . ¶ Christopher Plummer and Glenda Jackson in "Macbeth." . . . ¶ "Chess," a musical with a score by Benny Andersson and Bjorn Ulvaeus, lyrics by Tim Rice, and a book by Mr. Rice and Richard Nelson. . . . ¶ Joe Mantegna, Ron Silver, and Madonna in David Mamet's play "Speed-the-Plow." . . . ¶ "Carrie," a musical based on Stephen King's 1974 novel. With a book by Lawrence D. Cohen, music by Michael Gore, and lyrics by Dean Pitchford.

Dance—Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, April 12-17. . . . ¶ The American Ballet Theatre, at the Metropolitan Opera House, April 18-June 11. . . . ¶ The New York City Ballet, at the New York State Theatre, April 26-June 26.

Other Dates—Federal, New York State, and New York City income-tax returns for 1987 and estimates for 1988 are due Friday, April 15. . . . ¶ New York Armory Antiques Show, at the 7th Regiment Armory, April 20-24.

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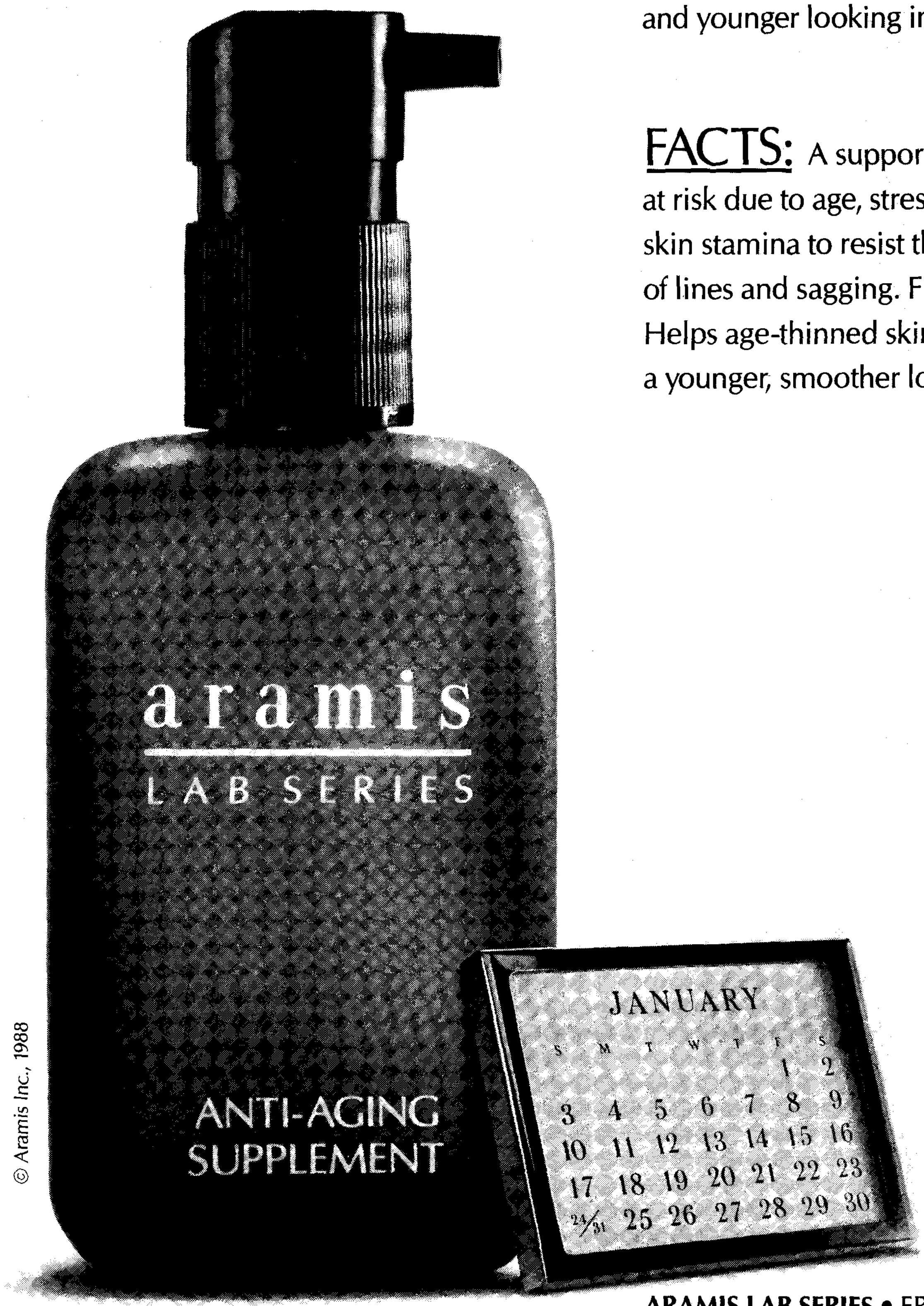
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

VARIETY
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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6			

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 18.

EAST SIDE

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
March 29-31: At 6, “César” (1936; directed by Marcel Pagnol; in French), with Raimu, Orane Démazis, and Charpin; and, at 8:30 and 10:10, “The Tarnished Angels” (1958; Douglas Sirk), with Rock Hudson, Robert Stack, and Dorothy Malone.
From April 1: (Separate admissions) “The Man in the Silk Hat” (1983; Maud Linder), a documentary about Max Linder; and “The Tarnished Angels.”

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: Through March 29: “Off Limits” (Christopher Crowe), with Willem Dafoe and Gregory Hines. From March 30 (tentative): “Beetlejuice” (Tim Burton), with Alec Baldwin, Geena Davis, and Michael Keaton.
Theatre 2: Through March 31: “Police Academy 5: Assignment Miami Beach” (Alan Myerson). From April 1 (tentative): “The Seventh Sign” (Carl Schultz), with Demi Moore, Michael Biehn, and Jürgen Prochnow.
Theatre 3: Through March 29: “Frantic” (†). From March 30: To be announced.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
“D.O.A.” (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel), with Dennis Quaid and Meg Ryan.

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
“Biloxi Blues” (Mike Nichols), with Matthew Broderick.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: “Moonstruck” (†).
Theatre 2: “The Unbearable Lightness of Being” (†).
Theatre 3: “A New Life” (Alan Alda), with Alda and Ann-Margret.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
Through March 29: “Frantic” (†).
From March 30: “Beetlejuice” (Tim Burton), with Alec Baldwin, Geena Davis, and Michael Keaton.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
(Matinées only) “The Fox and the Hound” (1981), an animated film; and (evenings only) “Little Nikita” (†).

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Through March 29: “Frantic” (†).
From March 30: To be announced.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
“Wall Street” (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
“Stand and Deliver” (Ramon Menendez), with Edward James Olmos and Lou Diamond Phillips.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: “Moonstruck” (†).
Theatre 2: “Police Academy 5: Assignment Miami Beach” (Alan Myerson).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: “Biloxi Blues” (Mike Nichols), with Matthew Broderick.
Theatre 2: “D.O.A.” (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel), with Dennis Quaid and Meg Ryan.

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
“High Season” (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: “Au Revoir les Enfants” (“Goodbye, Children”) (†).
Theatre 2: Through March 29: “Good Morning, Vietnam” (†). From March 30: “Night Zoo” (Jean-Claude Lauzon; in French).

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: Through March 31: “Hope and Glory” (†). From April 1: “The Seventh Sign” (Carl Schultz), with Demi Moore, Michael Biehn, and Jürgen Prochnow.
Theatre 2: Through March 31: “Masquerade” (†). From April 1: To be announced.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
“The Milagro Beanfield War” (Robert Redford), with Rubén Blades and Richard Bradford.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: “The Unbearable Lightness of Being” (†).
Theatre 2: “Dominick and Eugene” (Robert M. Young), with Tom Hulce and Ray Liotta.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
Through March 31: “Levy and Goliath” (Gérard Oury; in French).
From April 1: “Sorceress” (Suzanne Schiffman; in French).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
“A New Life” (Alan Alda), with Alda and Ann-Margret.

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
“Biloxi Blues” (Mike Nichols), with Matthew Broderick.

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: Through March 31: “Police Academy 5: Assignment Miami Beach” (Alan Myerson). From April 1: “Bright Lights, Big City” (James Bridges), with Michael J. Fox.
Theatre 2: Through March 31: “Vice Versa” (Brian Gilbert), with Judge Reinhold and Fred Savage. From April 1: To be announced.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: (Matinées only) “The Fox and the Hound” (1981), an animated film; and *(evenings only) “Moonstruck” (†).*
Theatre 2: “Good Morning, Vietnam” (†).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatres open in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through April 5: “Vincent: The Life and Death of Vincent van Gogh” (directed by Paul Cox). From April 6: “From the Pole to the Equator” (1986; Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci Lucchi).
Theatre 2: See listings under “Revival Houses.”

Bleecker St. Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: Through March 31: (Separate admissions) “Manon of the Spring” (Claude Berri; in French), with Yves Montand, Daniel Auteuil, and Emmanuelle Béart; and “Jean de Florette” (†).
Theatre 2: “Sammy and Rosie Get Laid” (†).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: “Hairspray” (†).
Theatre 2: Through March 31: “Dominick and Eugene” (Robert M. Young), with Tom Hulce and Ray Liotta. From April 1: To be announced.

8th St. Playhouse, *52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)*
“The Last Emperor” (†).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: Through March 31: “Good Morning, Vietnam” (†). From April 1: “The Milagro Beanfield War” (Robert Redford), with Rubén Blades and Richard Bradford.
Theatre 2: “Stand and Deliver” (Ramon Menendez), with Edward James Olmos and Lou Diamond Phillips.

Quad Cinema, *34 W. 13th. (255-8800)*
Theatre 1: “A Month in the Country” (†).
Theatre 2: Through March 31: “School Daze” (Spike Lee). From April 1 (tentative): “Stars and Bars” (Pat O’Connor), with Daniel Day Lewis.
Theatre 3: (Matinées only) “The Dead” (†); and (evenings only) “Little Nikita” (†).
Theatre 4: “Hope and Glory” (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: “Masquerade” (†).
Theatre 2: “Biloxi Blues” (Mike Nichols), with Matthew Broderick.
Theatre 3: Through March 31: (Matinées only) “The Fox and the Hound” (1981), an animated film; and (evenings only) “Johnny Be Good” (Bud Smith), with Anthony Michael Hall and Robert Downey, Jr. From April 1: “The Fox and the Hound.”

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
“The Fox and the Hound” (1981), an animated film.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
“D.O.A.” (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel), with Dennis Quaid and Meg Ryan.

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
“Le Caviar Rouge” (Robert Hossein; in French and Russian), with Hossein and Candice Patou.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
“The Last Emperor” (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Through March 31: “Empire of the Sun” (†).
From April 1: “Bellman and True” (Richard Loncraine), with Bernard Hill.

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)
“The Two Lives of Mattia Pascal” (Mario Monicelli; in Italian), with Marcello Mastroianni.

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
Through April 5: “Béatrice” (†).
From April 6: “Consuming Passions” (Giles Foster), with Vanessa Redgrave and Jonathan Pryce.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
Through March 29: “Broadcast News” (†).
From March 30: To be announced.

Loews Paramount, B’way at 61st. (247-5070)
“A New Life” (Alan Alda), with Alda and Ann-Margret.

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B’way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: “Subway to the Stars” (Carlos Diegues; a Brazilian film, in Portuguese).
Theatre 2: “My Life as a Dog” (Lasse Hallström; in Swedish), with Anton Glanzelius.
Theatre 3: “Girl from Hunan” (Xie Fei and U Lan; in Mandarin).

Cinema Studio I and 2, B’way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: Through March 31: “High Tide” (†). From April 1: “Playing Away” (Horace Ové).
Theatre 2: “Babette’s Feast” (Gabriel Axel; in Danish and French).

Regency, B’way at 67th. (724-3700)
Through March 31: “Shoot to Kill” (†).
From April 1: “The Milagro Beanfield War” (Robert Redford), with Rubén Blades and Richard Bradford.

Embassy 72nd St. I and 2, B’way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: “Fatal Attraction” (†).
Theatre 2: “Stars and Bars” (Pat O’Connor), with Daniel Day Lewis.

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B’way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: Through March 31: “The Unbearable Lightness of Being” (†). From April 1 (tentative): “Bright Lights, Big City” (James Bridges), with Michael J. Fox.
Theatre 2: “Masquerade” (†).
Theatre 3: “Stand and Deliver” (Ramon Menendez), with Edward James Olmos and Lou Diamond Phillips.
Theatre 4: Through March 31: “Dominick and Eugene” (Robert M. Young), with Tom Hulce and Ray Liotta. From April 1

(tentative): "The Seventh Sign" (Carl Schultz), with Demi Moore, Michael Biehn, and Jürgen Prochnow.
Theatre 5: "Hairspray" (†).
Theatre 6: Through March 29: "Frantic" (†). From March 30: "Beetlejuice" (Tim Burton), with Alec Baldwin, Geena Davis, and Michael Keaton.

Metro Cinema I and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "Biloxi Blues" (Mike Nichols), with Matthew Broderick.
Theatre 2: Through March 31: (Matinées only) "The Fox and the Hound" (1981), an animated film; and (evenings only) "Little Nikita" (†). From April 1: "The Fox and the Hound."

Columbia Cinema, B'way at 103rd. (866-7500)
Through March 31: "Johnny Be Good" (Bud Smith), with Anthony Michael Hall and Robert Downey, Jr.
From April 1: "The Invisible Kid" (Avery Crounse).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "D.O.A." (Rocky Morton and Annabel Jankel), with Dennis Quaid and Meg Ryan.
Theatre 2: "Police Academy 5: Assignment Miami Beach" (Alan Myerson).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "The Serpent and the Rainbow" (directed by Wes Craven).
Theatre 2: "Moving" (Alan Metter), with Richard Pryor.
Theatre 3: "School Daze" (Spike Lee).
Theatre 4: Through March 31: "Prison" (Renny Harlin). From April 1 (tentative): "The Seventh Sign" (Carl Schultz), with Demi Moore, Michael Biehn, and Jürgen Prochnow.
Theatre 5: (Matinées only) "The Fox and the Hound" (1981), an animated film; and (evenings only) "Little Nikita" (†).
Theatre 6: Through March 29: "Frantic" (†). From March 30 (tentative): "The Invisible Kid" (Avery Crounse).

Embassy I, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
"Shoot to Kill" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "Masquerade" (†).
Theatre 3: "Johnny Be Good" (Bud Smith), with Anthony Michael Hall and Robert Downey, Jr.
Theatre 4: "Good Morning, Vietnam" (†).

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
Through March 31: "Vice Versa" (Brian Gilbert), with Judge Reinhold and Fred Savage.
From April 1: "Bright Lights, Big City" (James Bridges), with Michael J. Fox.

Movieland, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
"Biloxi Blues" (Mike Nichols), with Matthew Broderick.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: Through March 31: "Off Limits" (Christopher Crowe), with Willem Dafoe and Gregory Hines. From April 1: To be announced.
Theatre 2: "Stand and Deliver" (Ramon Menendez), with Edward James Olmos and Lou Diamond Phillips.

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)
Through March 29: "Police Academy 5: Assignment Miami Beach" (Alan Myerson).
From March 30: "Beetlejuice" (Tim Burton), with Alec Baldwin, Geena Davis, and Michael Keaton.

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
March 28: "Evelyn Prentice" (1934; directed by William Howard), with William Powell and Myrna Loy; and "The Barbarian" (1933; Sam Wood), with Myrna Loy, Ramon Novarro, and C. Aubrey Smith.
March 29-30: "Dancing in the Dark" (1949; Irving Reis), with William Powell, Betsy Drake, and Mark Stevens; and "How to Marry a Millionaire" (1953; Jean Negulesco), with Marilyn Monroe, Betty Grable, and Lauren Bacall.
March 31-April 2: "Test Pilot" (1938; Victor Fleming), with Myrna Loy, Clark Gable, and Spencer Tracy; and "Song of the Thin Man" (1947; Edward Buzzell), with Myrna Loy and William Powell.
April 3-5: "The African Queen" (1951; John Huston), with Humphrey Bogart and Katharine Hepburn; and "The Maltese Falcon" (1941; John Huston), with Mary Astor, Humphrey Bogart, Sydney Greenstreet, Elisha Cook, Jr., and Peter Lorre.
From April 6: "Dodsworth" (1936; William Wyler), with Walter Huston, Ruth Chatterton, and Mary Astor; and "All That Money Can Buy" ("The Devil and Daniel Webster;" 1941; William Dieterle), with Walter Huston, Edward Arnold, and Anne Shirley.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through March 29: "Matewan" (1987; John Sayles), with Chris Cooper and James Earl Jones; and "The Grapes of Wrath" (1940; John Ford), with Henry Fonda and Jane Darwell.
March 30-31: "Day for Night" (1973; François Truffaut; in French), with Jacqueline Bisset, Jean-Pierre Aumont, Jean-Pierre Léaud, and Valentina Cortese; and "Confidentially Yours" (1984; François Truffaut; in French), with Fanny Ardant and Jean-Louis Trintignant.
April 1-2: "Liquid Sky" (1983; Slava Tsukerman); and "Home of the Brave" (1986; Laurie Anderson), with Anderson.
April 3: "That Obscure Object of Desire" (1977; Luis Buñuel; in French), with Fernando Rey, Carole Bouquet, and Angela Molina; and "El" ("This Strange Passion;" 1952; Luis Buñuel; a Mexican film, in Spanish), with Arturo de Cordova.
April 4-5: "To Catch a Thief" (1955; Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant, Grace Kelly, Jessie Royce Landis, Charles Vanel, and Brigitte Auber; and "Lifeboat" (1944; Alfred Hitchcock), with Tallulah Bankhead, William Bendix, John Hodiak, Henry Hull, and Walter Slezak.
From April 6: "L'Année des Méduses" (1987; Christopher Frank; in French); and "Heat of Desire" (1980; Luc Béraud; in French), with Patrick Dewaere.

Film Forum 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Through March 29: "Baby Face" (1933; Alfred E. Green), with Barbara Stanwyck, John Wayne, and George Brent; and "Call Her Savage" (1932; John Francis Dillon), with Clara Bow and Gilbert Roland.
March 30: "Me and My Gal" (1932; Raoul Walsh), with Spencer Tracy and Joan Bennett; and "Sailor's Luck" (1933; Raoul Walsh), with James Dunn, Sally Eilers, Sammy Cohen, and Victor Jory.
March 31: "Hold Your Man" (1933; Sam Wood), with Jean Harlow and Clark Gable; and "Ladies They Talk About" (1933; William Keighley and Howard Bretherton), with Barbara Stanwyck, Preston Foster, Lyle Talbot, and Lillian Roth.
April 1: "Night Nurse" (†); and "Forbidden" (1932; Frank Capra), with Barbara Stanwyck, Adolphe Menjou, and Ralph Bellamy.
April 2: "Freaks" (†); "Kongo" (1932; William Cowan), with Walter Huston, Lupe Velez, and Virginia Bruce; and "Murders in the Zoo" (1933; Edward Sutherland), with Lionel Atwill.
April 3: "Trouble in Paradise" (1932; Ernst Lubitsch), with Kay Francis, Herbert Marshall, Miriam Hopkins, and Edward Everett Horton; and "Murder at the Vanities" (†).
April 4: "Quick Millions" (1931; Rowland Brown), with Spencer Tracy and Sally Eilers; "Blood Money" (1933; Rowland Brown), with George Bancroft, Judith Anderson, and Frances Dee; and "Hell's Highway" (1932; Rowland Brown), with Richard Dix, Rochelle Hudson, and Tom Brown.
April 5: "Ex-Lady" (1933; Robert Florey), with Bette Davis, Gene Raymond, and

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April 6: "Blessed Event" (†); and "Broadway Thru a Keyhole" (1933; Lowell Sherman), with Constance Cummings and Russ Columbo.

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)

March 28: "Wonderful Times" (1951; Gunter Neuman; in German); and "The Captain of Koepenick" (1941), with Albert Basserman.

March 29: "A Hard Day's Night" (1964; Richard Lester), with the Beatles; and "Yellow Submarine" (1968; George Dunning), a full-length animated cartoon of the Beatles.

March 30: "The Seventh Victim" (1943; Mark Robson), with Tom Conway, Kim Hunter, and Jean Brooks; and "The Leopard Man" (1943; Jacques Tourneur), with Margo and Dennis O'Keefe.

March 31: "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" (1975; Miloš Forman), with Jack Nicholson, Louise Fletcher, and Will Sampson; and "Midnight Cowboy" (1969; John Schlesinger), with Dustin Hoffman and Jon Voight.

April 1-2: "Play Misty for Me" (1971; Clint Eastwood), with Eastwood and Jessica Walter; and "Remember My Name" (1979; Alan Rudolph), with Geraldine Chaplin, Anthony Perkins, Berry Berenson, and Moses Gunn.

April 3: "The Wizard of Oz" (1939; Victor Fleming), with Judy Garland, Bert Lahr, Frank Morgan, Ray Bolger, and Jack Haley; and "Easter Parade" (1948; Charles Walters), with Fred Astaire, Judy Garland, and Peter Lawford.

April 4: "Sleepwalk" (1987; Sara Driver); and "Broken Mirrors" (1984; Marleen Gorris).

April 5: "Journey Into Fear" (1943; Orson Welles and Norman Foster), with Welles, Dolores Del Rio, and Joseph Cotten; and "Falstaff" ("Chimes at Midnight;" 1967; Orson Welles), with Welles, Jeanne Moreau, John Gielgud, Keith Baxter, and Margaret Rutherford.

April 6: "Bedlam" (1946; Mark Robson), with Boris Karloff; and "The Body Snatcher" (1945; Robert Wise), with Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

March 28: "The Exterminating Angel" (1962; Luis Buñuel; a Mexican film, in Spanish), with Silvia Pinal; and "That Obscure Object of Desire" (1977; Luis Buñuel; in French), with Fernando Rey, Carole Bouquet, and Angela Molina.

March 29: "The Petrified Forest" (1936; Archie Mayo), with Leslie Howard, Bette Davis, and Humphrey Bogart; and "The Man Who Came to Dinner" (1942; William Keighley), with Bette Davis, Ann Sheridan, and Monty Woolley.

March 30: "The Beachcomber" (1938; Erich Pommer), with Charles Laughton and Elsa Lanchester; and "Ruggles of Red Gap" (1935; Leo McCarey), with Charles Laughton and Mary Boland.

March 31: "The Glass Menagerie" (1950; Irving Rapper), with Jane Wyman, Kirk Douglas, Gertrude Lawrence, and Arthur Kennedy; and "The Rose Tattoo" (1955; Daniel Mann), with Anna Magnani, Burt Lancaster, Marisa Pavan, Ben Cooper, Virginia Grey, and Jo Van Fleet.

April 1-2: "Mr. Arkadin" (1955; Orson Welles), with Welles, Michael Redgrave, Patricia Medina, and Akim Tamiroff; and "The Stranger" (1946; Orson Welles), with Welles, Edward G. Robinson, and Loretta Young.

April 3: "Ben-Hur" (1925 †).

April 4: "Les Enfants Terribles" ("The Strange Ones;" 1949; Jean-Pierre Melville; in French); and "La Faute de L'Abbé Mouret" (1970; Georges Franju; in French).

April 5: "Marie Antoinette" (1938; W. S. Van Dyke), with Norma Shearer, Tyrone Power, Robert Morley, and John Barrymore; and "A Tale of Two Cities" (1935; Jack Conway), with Ronald Colman, Edna May Oliver, and Blanche Yurka.

April 6: "Romance" (1930; Clarence Brown), with Greta Garbo, Gavin Gordon, Lewis Stone, and Elliott Nugent; and "Inspiration" (1931; Clarence Brown), with Greta Garbo and Robert Montgomery.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

Theatre I: April 1 at 2:30 and 6: "Pather Panchali" (1955; directed by Satyajit Ray; in Bengali, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ April 2 at 2 and 5: "Il Grido" (1957; Michelangelo Antonioni; in Italian, with English subtitles), with Steve Cochran, Alida Valli, and Betsy Blair. . . . ¶ April 3 at 2 and 5: "Picnic on the Grass" (1959; Jean Renoir; in French, with English subtitles), with Paul Meurisse. . . . ¶ April 5 at 2:30 and 6: "Paths of Glory" (1957; Stanley Kubrick), with Kirk Douglas.

Theatre 2: March 28-29 at 3 and 6:30: Two different programs of films by Hans Richter. . . . ¶ March 31 at 3 and 6:30: "Wilhelm Reich: Viva Little Man" (1987; Digne Meller Marcovicz).

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015)—A program of comedy films. April 1 at 6:30 and 8:30: "I Was Born, but . . ." (1932; Yasujiro Ozu; a silent Japanese film), with Tatsuo Saito and Hideo Sugawara.

Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—"WNET Thirteen: 25 Years on the Air," over a hundred hours of news, public affairs, documentary, music, dance, theatre, nature, science, and children's programming. The second section, featuring music, dance, and theatre, is on view through April 23. The schedule of performances is complicated; our best advice is to phone the museum for titles, schedules, and ticket information. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Collective for Living Cinema, 41 White St. (925-2111)—March 28 at 8: "Floating Clouds" (1955; Mikio Naruse; in Japanese, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ March 29 at 8: "Tarzam" (1961; Rudy Burckhardt), with Taylor Mead; and "The Playhouse" (1921), "One Week" (1920), and "The Frozen North" (1922), all silent films directed by Buster Keaton and Eddie Cline, with Keaton. . . . ¶ March 30 at 8: "The Exterminating Angel" (1962; Luis Buñuel; a Mexican film, in Spanish, with English subtitles), with Silvia Pinal. . . . ¶ March 31 at 8: A program of experimental super-8 mm. gay and lesbian films. . . . ¶ From April 1: To be announced.

Plays Into Film: The Playwright's Perspective—A series of films and lectures. April 5 at 8: "On the Town" (1949; Stanley Donen and Gene Kelly), with Kelly, Frank Sinatra, Betty Garrett, Ann Miller, and Vera-Ellen. Betty Comden and Adolph Green will be present. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100).

Zorina and Balanchine: The Movie Years—Two in a series of four films choreographed by George Balanchine, starring Vera Zorina. March 29 at 8: "I Was an Adventuress" (1940; Gregory Ratoff). . . . ¶ April 5 at 8: "Star Spangled Rhythm" (1942; George Marshall). (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. 570-3949.)

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(Unsigned notes are by Pauline Kael; others are by Terrence Rafferty.)

Au Revoir les Enfants (Goodbye, Children)—It's set in Occupied France in 1944, when the writer-director Louis Malle was an eleven-year-old at a Catholic boys' boarding school near Fontainebleau that sheltered several Jewish boys. The Gestapo learned they were there, and sent the ones they found to Auschwitz, and the headmaster to a work camp. One of the Jewish boys was in Malle's class, but Malle didn't get to know him well and didn't realize that he was Jewish. For the dramatic purposes of the movie, he has conceived a close friendship between his alter ego, the fair-haired Julien Quentin (Gaspard Manesse), and the dark boy who is using the false name Jean Bonnet (Raphaël Fejtö). But nothing comes into clear focus—not the boys' attitudes, not even the images. The film (especially the first half) seems padded, formal, discreet. It's like watching a faded French classic. And there's something unseemly about the way Jean is used as an aesthetic object—spiritual, sensitive, exotic. With Francine Racette as Julien's mother and François Négret as the informer. In French. (Reviewed in our issue of 2/22/88.) (Cinema I.)

Béatrice—Bertrand Tavernier's drama about incest in the Middle Ages must have been intended as a harshly realistic look at the barbarism of the times—there's no other explanation for its flat, dogged style. But the script (by Colo Tavernier O'Hagan, the director's ex-wife) is too oddly structured to give us a coherent history lesson: the movie's embodiment of evil, the brutal knight François de Cortemare (Bernard-Pierre Donnadieu), is a man who very pointedly *doesn't* believe in God, so it's hard to see his viciousness as particularly representative of a highly religious age. And the director's "realism" is selective. What should be the film's most shocking scene—Cortemare's rape of his teen-age daughter, Béatrice (Julie Delpy)—is softened by dim lighting and discreet cuts, while a scene in which Béatrice, pregnant by her father, persuades her brother to kick her repeatedly in the stomach is rendered in stark daylight and seems to last forever. The director's treatment makes the girl's attempted abortion far uglier than the rape; but there's no telling, in this sluggish, confused movie, whether this is a deliberate effect or the unfortunate result of careless filmmaking. The cinematography is by Bruno de Keyzer, who achieves a handful of striking compositions. In French.—T.R. (Paris; through April 5.)

Ben-Hur (1925)—The Ramon Novarro–Francis X. Bushman version; it was a remake even then, but M-G-M put so much Amazing, Gargantuan, Stupendous, and Mighty Biblical Pageantry into it that vast numbers of viewers were swept off their feet. Novarro has his adolescent charm and beauty, and Bushman's nose is majestically Roman. With Betty Bronson, May McAvoy, Carmel Myers, and Claire McDowell. Directed by Fred Niblo. Silent. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; April 3.)

Blessed Event (1932)—Probably nobody in Hollywood history was better at the art of timing and placing a wisecrack than Lee Tracy. (He used his hands as much as his voice.) In this newspaper comedy-satire based on the rise of the fast-talking gossip columnist Walter Winchell, Tracy shows his peerless style—he can get a sob in his voice for the benefit of his radio listeners while grinning at his intimates. The columnist has a pet peeve—a bright-eyed young crooner with an idiotic smile, played by Dick Powell. It's quick and breezy and very likable. Directed by Roy Del Ruth. (Film Forum 2; April 6.)

Broadcast News—The writer-producer-director James L. Brooks puts us inside the world of a network's Washington bureau and sets up an adversarial relationship between the reddish-blond charmer Tom (William Hurt), who represents TV's corruption of the news into entertainment, and dark, broody Aaron (Albert Brooks), a near-genius newsman who, on the surface, at least, represents substance and integrity. The heroine, Jane (Holly Hunter), is a producer, and she and Aaron are supposed to be high-principled professionals, as well as close friends. The satirical, romantic-comedy dilemma is that Jane finds herself falling in love with Tom, who incarnates everything that she despises. Basically all the picture is saying is that beautiful, assured people have an edge over the rest of us, no matter how high our I.Q.s are. And it lacks any filmmaking excitement. With all the surface authenticity Jim Brooks gives us, he himself represents the corruption of movies into TV. (1/11/88) (Cinema 3; through March 29.)

The Dead—Working in a mood of tranquil exuberance, the eighty-year-old John Huston made a great warm, funny movie out of the great story that James Joyce wrote at twenty-five. Huston never before blended his actors so intuitively, so musically. The party that the Morkan sisters and their fortyish niece give in their Dublin town house on January 6, 1904, the Feast of the Epiphany, suggests the Chekhov production of your dreams, or maybe one of Satyajit Ray's triumphs. The cast is glorious: Donal McCann is Gabriel; Anjelica Huston is Gabriel's wife, Gretta; Donal Donnelly is Freddy; Marie Kean is Freddy's mother; Cathleen Delany is Aunt Julia; Helena Carroll is Aunt Kate; Ingrid Craigie is Mary Jane; Dan O'Herlihy is the Protestant Mr. Browne; and Frank Patterson is the tenor who sings "The Lass of Aughrim." Screenplay by Tony Huston; cinematography by Fred Murphy; score by Alex North. (12/14/87) (Quad Cinema. Matinées only.)

Empire of the Sun—At the outset, this Steven Spielberg epic is so big and majestic you want to laugh in pleasure, and it stays that way for about forty-five minutes—Spielberg takes over Shanghai, and makes it his city. But then, first in brief patches and then in longer ones, his directing goes terribly wrong. The story, taken from J. G. Ballard's autobiographical novel, is set at the outbreak of the Second World War, and it's about Jim (Christian Bale), an eleven-year-old British schoolboy, who is separated from his parents when the Japanese Army invades the city, on December 8, 1941, and how he changes in order to survive three years of starving in a prison camp. It isn't told straightforwardly, though. Spielberg throws himself into bravura passages, lingers over them trying to give them a poetic obsessiveness, and loses his grasp of the narrative. For the sake of emotion—to have something to say, to give the picture some meaning—he pumps it full of false emotion. (That's what his poetry is.) John Williams' editorializing music swells and swooshes, trying to make you feel that something religious is going on. 2 hours and 33 minutes. (12/28/87) (Carnegie Hall Cinema; through March 31.)

Fatal Attraction—A primer on the bad things that can happen if a man cheats on his wife. There's sometimes a fine line between sexiness and craziness, and the hero (Michael Douglas), a Manhattan corporate lawyer—a settled married man—isn't hip enough to catch the danger signals when he lets a woman book editor (Glenn Close) talk him into going with her to her loft. Once this woman begins behaving as if she had a right to a share in the lawyer's life, she becomes the dreaded lunatic of horror movies. But with a difference: she parrots the aggressively angry, self-righteous statements that have become commonplaces of feminist fiction, and they're so inappropriate to the circumstances that they're the proof she's loco. They're also the director Adrian Lyne's and the screenwriter James Dearden's hostile version of feminism. Basically, this is a gross-out slasher movie in a glossy format, and it enforces conventional morality (in the era of AIDS) by piling fear on paranoiac fear. With Anne Archer as the beautiful homebody wife, Ellen Hamilton Latzen as the bright little daughter, and Stuart Pankin as the clowning pal. Tip-top editing by Michael Kahn and Peter E. Berger. (10/19/87) (Embassy 72nd St.)

Frantic—It begins promisingly, with Harrison Ford as a San Francisco heart surgeon who comes to Paris with his wife (Betty Buckley); they arrive at their hotel and while he takes a shower she disappears. The director, Roman Polanski, shows his guile and wit, but a thriller needs more than an occasional perverse undertone; it needs some design, some shapeliness. This thing grinds on without ever being able to compensate for its pathetic plot and its unwritten characters. It involves mixed-up suitcases and a couple of night clubs and rooftops, and dope dealers and Arabs and a childlike, amoral tootsie (Emmanuelle Seigner). The script is credited to Polanski and Gérard Brach; the cinematography is by Witold Sobocinski; the music is by Ennio Morricone. With brief appearances by Alexandra Stewart and David Huddleston. (3/21/88) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 34th St. East, Sutton, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center; through March 29.)

Freaks (1932)—Though this circus story, directed by Tod Browning, is superficially sympathetic to the maimed and the mindless that it features, it uses images of physical deformity for their enormous horror potential, and at the end, when the pinheads and the armless and legless creatures scurry about to revenge themselves on a normal woman (Olga Baclanova), the film becomes a true nightmare. With Leila Hyams, Wallace Ford, and Roscoe Ates. (Film Forum 2; April 2.)

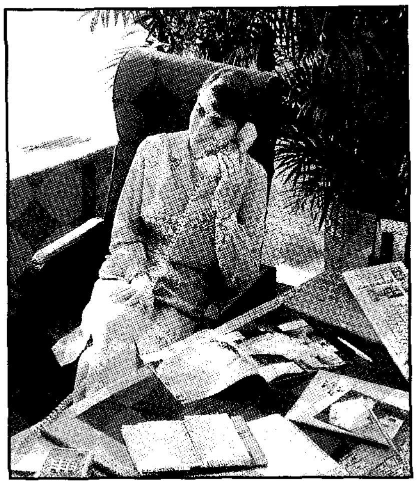
Good Morning, Vietnam—It sounded like a first-rate idea: Robin Williams doing his manic free-association comedy as a disk jockey, Adrian Cronauer, on Armed Forces Radio in Saigon in 1965. But the picture makes the character out to be a vulnerable, compassionate, respectful-of-the-Vietnamese wonderful guy, and the director, Barry Levinson, has a numbing sense of rhythm. Williams' riffs are chopped short, and the film keeps cutting to soldiers breaking up over his spiel before it's out of his mouth. There is an Adrian Cronauer, and the movie is very loosely based on his exploits, but the way the story line (from the script by Mitch Markowitz) has been directed it's a clumsier version of the plots of fifties musicals. (1/11/88) (86th Street East Twin, and Embassy. . . . ¶ Cinema II; through March 29. . . . ¶ Art Greenwich Twin; through March 31.)

Hairspray—The writer-director John Waters treats the message movie as a genre to be parodied, just like the teenpic. Combining the two, he comes up with a pop dadaist musical comedy, set in Baltimore in 1962. Waters loves narrative, and he has half a dozen plots crisscrossing each other. In the middle are the spherical Mrs. Edna Turnblad (played by the male actor Divine) and her baby-blimp daughter, Tracy (Ricki Lake); they wear matching mother-and-daughter outfits. Tracy, who's the newest teen-age dancer on "The Corny Collins Show," discovers that black kids aren't allowed to take part and she becomes a leader in the fight for integration. Meanwhile, Divine watches over Tracy and preens like a mother hen. There's a what-the-hell quality to Divine's acting which the film needs; it would be too close to a real teenpic without it. When Divine's Edna Turnblad is onscreen in the sleeveless dresses she's partial to, the movie has something like the lunacy of a W. C. Fields in drag. With Ruth Brown, Debbie Harry, Sonny Bono, Jerry Stiller, Shawn Thompson, Ric Ocasek, Pia Zadora, Jo Ann Havrilla, and Waters himself as a sicko psychiatrist. (3/7/88) (Waverly, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

High Season—With Jacqueline Bisset, James Fox, and Irene Papas; directed by Clare Peploe. (Reviewed in this issue.) (D. W. Griffith.)

High Tide—This is a woman's picture in the way that "Stella Dallas" was—it's about the mother-daughter bond. But it's also a woman's picture in a new way: the Australian director Gillian Armstrong has the technique and the assurance to put a woman's fluid, not fully articulated emotions right onto the screen. And she has an actress—Judy Davis—who's a genius at moods. As one of three backup singers for a touring Elvis imitator, Judy Davis is contemptuous of the cruddy act, contemptuous of herself. Feeling put down, the dumb-lug Elvis fires her, and she's left alone at the beginning of winter in a ramshackle beach town on the magnificent, windswept coast of New South Wales. There she encounters her lonely teen-age daughter (Claudia Karvan), whom she'd given up to her confident, belligerent mother-in-law (Jan Adele) thirteen years earlier. A great many young women are likely to feel that this is the movie they've wanted to make. The script is by Laura Jones; the superb cinematography is by Russell Boyd, who was also the camera operator; the stunningly effective editing is by Nick Beauman. With Colin Friels, Bob Purtell, John Clayton, and Mark Hembrow. (2/22/88) (Cinema Studio; through March 31.)

Hope and Glory—A great comedy about the blitz. In this autobiographical film, the writer-director John Boorman has had the inspiration to desentimentalize wartime England and show us the Second World War the way he saw it as an eight-year-old—as a party that kept going day after day, night after night. Boorman lets his characters say the previously unsayable. Bored with crouching indoors during the nightly raids by the Luftwaffe, the dimply blond fifteen-year-old Dawn (Sammi Davis), the eldest of the three Rohan children, runs outside, watches the



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firefighters at work on a blazing house, and dances in the Rohans' postage-stamp-size front garden. "It's lovely!" she calls out. The large cast includes Sebastian Rice Edwards as the eight-year-old Bill, Geraldine Muir as his little sister, Sarah Miles as his mother, David Hayman as his father, Ian Bannen as his grandfather, and Susan Wooldridge, Derrick O'Connor, and Jean-Marc Barr as the Canadian jokester. (10/5/87) (Quad Cinema. . . . ¶ Gemini; through March 31.)

Jean de Florette—With Yves Montand, Gérard Depardieu, Elisabeth Depardieu, and Daniel Auteuil; directed by Claude Berri. In French. (7/13/87) (Bleecker St. Cinema; through March 31.)

The Last Emperor—Bernardo Bertolucci tells the story of Pu Yi, who was not quite three when, in 1908, he was set on the Dragon Throne in Peking's Forbidden City and became the titular ruler of a third of the people on earth. After being deposed and then enthroned again in Japanese-occupied Manchuria, he was in Soviet custody for five years, and then spent ten years being "reëducated" in a Chinese war-criminals prison. The movie doesn't have the juicy absurdity that seems to pour right out of the historical story. And it suppresses the drama. But it has pictorial grace and a dull fascination. Bertolucci presents Pu Yi (John Lone) as a man without will or backbone who lives his life as spectacle—who watches his life go by. And so we're given a historical pageant without a protagonist. There's an idea here, but it's a dippy idea—it results in a passive movie. With Joan Chen and Peter O'Toole. Cinematography by Vittorio Storaro; the film shows the palaces and courtyards of the two-hundred-and-fifty-acre Forbidden City. 2 hours and 46 minutes. (11/30/87) (8th St. Playhouse, and 57th St. Playhouse.)

Little Nikita—The idea is promising: Jeff Grant (River Phoenix), a smart, good-looking San Diego teen-ager whose biggest problem is how to get into the Air Force Academy, discovers that his bland parents are actually Russians—spies, at that. The Grants (Caroline Kava and Richard Jenkins) are "sleepers," agents who have been inactive for years but must remain perpetually ready for assignment. After a couple of decades of suburban American existence, Mom and Dad aren't even close to being ready when the call comes; their cover has turned into their life, and they've gone soft. This is better material for comedy than for drama, but the director, Richard Benjamin, seems to have gone soft somewhere himself. Instead of emphasizing the absurdity of the Grants' dilemma and the hilariously blatant contrivances of the plot, he treats "Little Nikita" as a straightforward suspense thriller. (This goes against his own strengths as well as the story's: he has no idea how to stage action sequences.) When all the unconvincing thrills are over, the movie winds up with an embarrassing burst of "heart": it wants us to know that family is good, and that Russians—*some* Russians—are, maybe, sort of like normal people, almost (except for the bushy eyebrows). Sidney Poitier, as the F.B.I. agent who breaks the bad news to Jeff, comes closest to resembling a human being. Also with Richard Bradford and Richard Lynch. The script is by John Hill and Bo Goldman; only the slightest trace of Goldman's usual wit and craft is evident.—T.R. (Eastside Cinema, Quad Cinema, and Criterion Center. Evenings only. . . . ¶ Metro Cinema; through March 31, evenings only.)

Masquerade—A tranquil, sophisticated thriller set in the Hamptons. The orphan heroine (Meg Tilly) belongs to the old rich; her money—about two hundred million dollars—has a patina. The men who circle around her are Rob Lowe as a hired-hand yachting captain, John Glover as the last of her mother's many husbands, and Doug Savant as a new police officer. Thin as the picture is, it has an odd, subterranean pull. Murders take place, but the narrative just keeps unfolding effortlessly, and you're drawn along, wanting to understand the pattern of deceit. Bob Swaim directed, from a crafty and even-toned script by Dick Wolf; the cinematography, by David Watkin, gives the life of the rich a luxuriance—makes it palpably desirable. With Dana Delany, Kim Cattrall, and Erik Holland. (3/21/88) (23rd St. West Triplex, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy. . . . ¶ Gemini; through March 31.)

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A Month in the Country—Pat O'Connor's film, based on a novel by J. L. Carr, is intelligent and scrupulously made, but it never comes to life. Set in Yorkshire just after the First World War, it's about several kinds of restoration: A young veteran named Birkin (Colin Firth), emotionally blasted by the war, accepts a commission from a small country church to uncover a long-neglected mural by an unknown medieval artist. In the process of restoring this odd, apocalyptic tableau—a disturbing vision that the young man finds himself identifying with—Birkin somehow returns to a semblance of his prewar self. The themes are impeccably worked out in the script (by the playwright Simon Gray), though in ways that seem at odds with the story's emotional core. "A Month in the Country" is an attempt to restore something, too—the serene confidence of well-made nineteenth-century fiction—but the project has no conviction. The cast includes Kenneth Branagh, Patrick Malahide, and the wonderful Natasha Richardson.—T.R. (Quad Cinema.)

Moonstruck—A rose-tinted black comedy, with its own special lushness. Cher is devastatingly funny and sinuous and beautiful as a widowed bookkeeper who lives with her Italian-American family in a big old brownstone in Brooklyn. When the bookkeeper and her fiancé's brother, a baker (Nicolas Cage), start lusting for one another, a fairy-tale full moon lights up the movie. And when you see that the whole cast of family members are involved in libidinal confusions the opera-buffa structure can make you feel close to deliriously happy. Cage is a wonderful romantic clown: he can look stupefied while he smolders. And the director, Norman Jewison, working from John Patrick Shanley's script, stylizes the ethnic performances given by the husky-voiced Olympia Dukakis, the great, leering Julie Bovasso, Vincent Gardenia, Danny Aiello, John Mahoney, and Anita Gillette. The picture is slender, but it's an original: its mockery is a giddy homage to our desire for grand passion. (1/25/88) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, and Manhattan Twin. . . . ¶ 86th Street East Twin. Evenings only.)

Murder at the Vanities (1934)—A backstage musical with a murderer loose in the theatre—an unusual mixture of thriller and musical that is moderately effective both ways, though the doubling of the thirties conventions makes it plot-heavy and doubly antiqued. The star is the dimpled international idol Carl Brisson (who sings "Cocktails for Two"); with Jack Oakie, Kitty Carlisle, Victor McLaglen, Gail Patrick, Dorothy Stickney, Gertrude Michael (who sings "Marahuana"), and some sumptuous footage of Duke Ellington and his orchestra. Directed by Mitchell Leisen. (Film Forum 2; April 3.)

Night Nurse (1931)—There's a memorable moment in this hardboiled early talkie melodrama when a drunken rich woman has passed out on the floor of her home, and Barbara Stanwyck, the nurse who is tending the woman's sick children, stands over her and says disgustedly, "You mother!" William Wellman directed this picture in his fast, unvarnished style; it has a grungy likability. Clark Gable is the sexy villain, a thieving gigolo-chauffeur in a black uniform; his specialty is socking women. Stanwyck gets it right on the jaw. But Wellman knew how to use Stanwyck for her unsentimental strength, and she does some no-nonsense slugging of her own that startled audiences at the time—and helped make her a public favorite. With Joan Blondell, who is funny and vivacious as the heroine's pal. (Film Forum 2; April 1.)

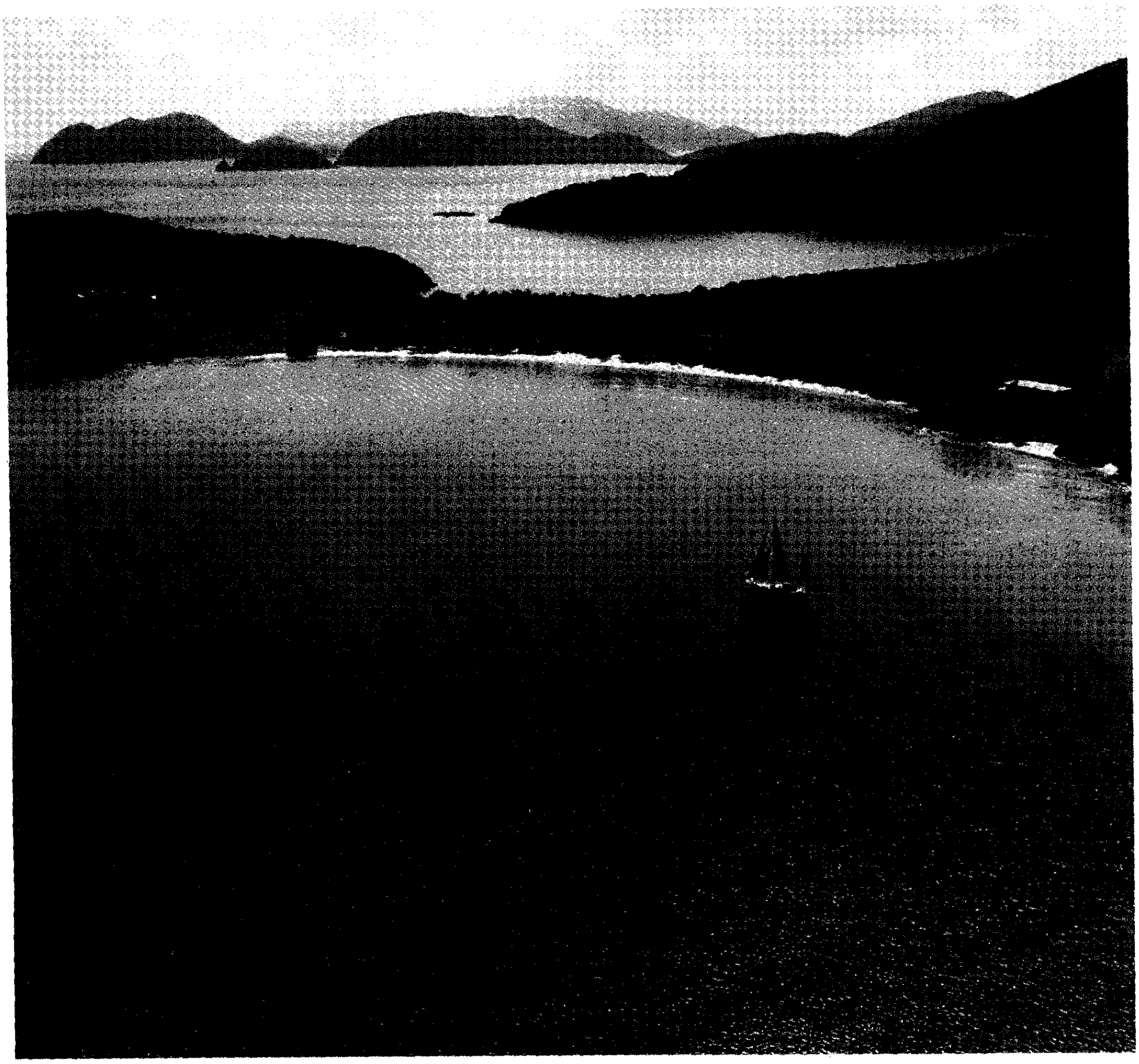
Sammy and Rosie Get Laid—With Ayub Khan Din, Frances Barber, and Shashi Kapoor; directed by Stephen Frears. (11/16/87) (Bleecker St. Cinema.)

Shoot to Kill—Sidney Poitier plays an F.B.I. agent tracking a deranged killer through the Pacific Northwest wilderness. The screenwriters (Harv Zimmel, Michael Burton, and Daniel Petrie, Jr.) have constructed this story as if they were desperadoes on the run, and Roger Spottiswoode, the director, is a hostage to their slapdash, random-killer methods. The action set pieces are superbly staged, but less powerful than they'd be if there were any coherent narrative context for them. Spottiswoode outclasses the material, and so does Poitier: though he doesn't really have a character to play, his quiet authority keeps the movie from seeming as cold and cheesily manipulative as it might have. Also with Tom Berenger, Kirstie Alley, Clancy Brown, and Richard Masur. The excellent cinematography is by Michael Chapman.—T.R. (Embassy 1. . . . ¶ Regency; through March 31.)

The Unbearable Lightness of Being—Directed by Philip Kaufman, this adaptation of Milan Kundera's novel is touching in sophisticated ways that you don't expect from an American director. A prankish sex comedy, it treats modern political events with a delicate—yet almost sly—sense of tragedy. It's the way the variations of jealousy and erotic attraction are played out by the three principal actors—an Englishman (Daniel Day-Lewis), a Swedish woman (Lena Olin), and a Frenchwoman (Juliette Binoche), all playing Czechs—that gives the movie its wonderfully unresolved texture. The story begins in Prague in 1968, during the period of freedom of expression and artistic flowering known as "socialism with a human face." Day-Lewis's Tomas is a hedonist, a womanizer, and an eminent young brain surgeon; Olin's Sabina, a painter who is his longtime sex partner, and Binoche's Tereza, whom he marries, represent the two poles of his life—lightness and weight. Kaufman has an exuberant temperament, and the spirit of the film is younger and looser than that of the book; a short two hours and fifty-three minutes, the picture has a whirling beauty. (2/8/88) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, and Loews New York Twin. . . . ¶ Loews 84th Street Sixplex; through March 31.)

Wall Street—Oliver Stone makes films in the overwrought pulp style of directors like Samuel Fuller and Robert Aldrich. Everything has the hysterically urgent tone of a war movie, and the actors scream their lines as if they were struggling to be heard above the din of artillery fire. Applying his combat-zone sensibility to the financial community, Stone produces some good, weird comedy in the movie's manic first hour, as the young stockbroker hero (Charlie Sheen) claws his way to success by providing inside information to a ruthless corporate raider (Michael Douglas). As the picture goes on, though, the disparity between Stone's complex subject and his melodramatic style becomes less and less entertaining. Repeating the worst idea in "Platoon," he turns the movie into a contest for the young hero's soul, a battle between his decent union-man father (Martin Sheen) and the greedy, reptilian Douglas, and we begin to wonder if Charlie Sheen's soul is really worth all this fuss. (At one point, he steps out onto his balcony and muses aloud, "Who am I?," and the audience has to think a minute: Tom Cruise? Judd Nelson?) Also with Daryl Hannah (cruelly directed), Hal Holbrook, and Terence Stamp.—T.R. (Gotham Cinema.)

ROCKRESORTS



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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

"PREZ SENDS IN AIRBORNE," the *Post* hurrahed. Footage of American soldiers parachuting through tropical skies suddenly filled the evening news. Where were these thirty-two hundred troops—two battalions of the Army's 82nd Airborne Division, two battalions of the Seventh Infantry—going with such fanfare? The question seemed, for the moment, unimportant beside the simple, exciting fact that they were going *somewhere*—making "a show of force." The White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater emphasized "the symbolic value" of what was described officially as a ten-day "emergency deployment readiness exercise."

The four battalions landed in Honduras, of course—a detail that undoubtedly seemed more than incidental to the citizens of that country. The occasion for the American airlift was the incursion by Nicaraguan troops, fighting the weakened Contras, into a remote area of southern Honduras, but in a larger sense the occasion was provided by the long-standing unwholesome relationship between Honduras and the United States.

No country has ever fitted the stereotype of "Banana Republic" better than Honduras. Thinly populated, desperately poor, its sense of national identity weak even by Central American standards, Honduras has always lacked political and economic leadership. The manager of the United Fruit Company, which for many years, in partnership with the United States Embassy, completely dominated the country, once said, "In Honduras a mule costs more than a deputy." Partly because of its extreme underdevelopment, Honduras has not suffered civil wars like the ones that in recent years have torn apart its three immediate neighbors—Nicaragua, Guatemala, and El Salvador. But the strategic location of Honduras has not gone unremarked in Washington, and when the fledgling Reagan Administration decided that Central America would be the next great battleground against World Communism, military aid to Honduras was increased grotesquely. Over two fiscal years—1982 and 1983—twice as much military aid was allocated to Honduras as had been allocated to it in the preceding thirty-five years. (Economic aid was also increased, but after seven years, during which the United States Agency for International Development has become the primary economic-decision-making body in the country, Honduras remains the poorest nation in Central America, and the third poorest in the Western Hemisphere, after Haiti and Bolivia.) The main effects of the massive infusion of military aid have been a tightening of the military's grip on Honduras and enhancement of American control over the country's leaders.

There are forces that restrain and compete with American domination of Honduras, and a recent article in the *Times* offered a startling glimpse of some of them. Drug trafficking among senior Honduran Army officers is evidently widespread. The drug trade in Honduras is linked to the Colombian drug trade, which supplies most of the cocaine in the United States; and yet, according to two American officials, the American Embassy has opposed any vigorous efforts to investigate Honduran Army involvement in it, because the Army's support is essential to the American presence in the country. A senior Reagan Administration official told the *Times* that despite the hundreds of millions of dollars in aid going to Honduras "we can't compete with the kind of money the Colombian dealers are offering." The Colombians might even decide, according to the *Times*, to use their leverage on the Honduran Army to shut down the Americans' most cherished installation—the Contra bases. Why would the Colombians do such a thing? As a favor to a friend, Fidel Castro.

Sea Breeze
MOTEL
NO VACANCY
CLOSED FOR THE SEASON

There is also plenty of popular sentiment against what some Hondurans call "the U.S. occupation," and against the military's role in Honduran political life. In the early nineteen-eighties, this discontent was addressed by a secret Honduran Army unit called Battalion 3-16, many of whose members had been trained in the United States. Between 1981 and 1984, Battalion 3-16 kidnapped, tortured, "disappeared," or murdered as many as a hundred and thirty people in Honduras—trade unionists, students, human-rights activists. Battalion 3-16's campaign of terror abated after a military coup in 1984 dispatched its leader, General Gustavo Alvarez Martínez, to Florida (where he became a highly paid "consultant" to the United States Department of Defense and an evangelist). Still, in January of this year, after the Inter-American Court of Human Rights began holding hearings on human-rights abuses in Honduras, a prominent activist and a military policeman who had agreed to testify were summarily murdered by death squads.

The list of American affronts to

Honduran sovereignty is long—more than three thousand American troops were operating in the country even before this latest "exercise"—but none rank higher than the decision to base the Contras on Honduran soil. The Contra bases put Honduras in an impossible position. Officially, they didn't exist. Meanwhile, an endless train of American supply flights, politicians, and journalists was streaming into and out of jungle airstrips in a mysterious land somewhere east of Tegucigalpa. Since the signing of the Arias peace plan, the situation of Honduras has become even more untenable. The plan called for the termination of all outside support for rebel forces in Central America, but the Contra bases remained. The plan called for the resettlement of refugees, but there has been no effort to resettle the thousands of Honduran peasants who were forced off their land to make room for the bases. Among the five signers of the Arias peace plan, Honduras has by far the worst record of compliance. And yet the diplomatic embarrassment caused by the Contra bases has been nothing compared with the real danger they have represented to Honduras: the possibility that they might drag Honduras into a war with Nicaragua.

That possibility seemed to recede with the signing, less than a week after the American airlift, of a cease-fire in Nicaragua. But the Administration's manifest unhappiness at the news of peace belied its display of "solidarity" with Honduras. Aiding the Contra cause both in Congress and in the field was plainly the airlift's real goal—along with, some cynics suggested, distracting public attention from the Iran-Contra indictments. Most of the official announcements, though, concerned the welfare of Honduras. In fact, at a White House meeting on the morning before the airlift began, President Reagan, according to the Washington *Post*, "indicated he did not wish Honduras to feel isolated." There seemed little danger of that.

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Leonie Rysanek

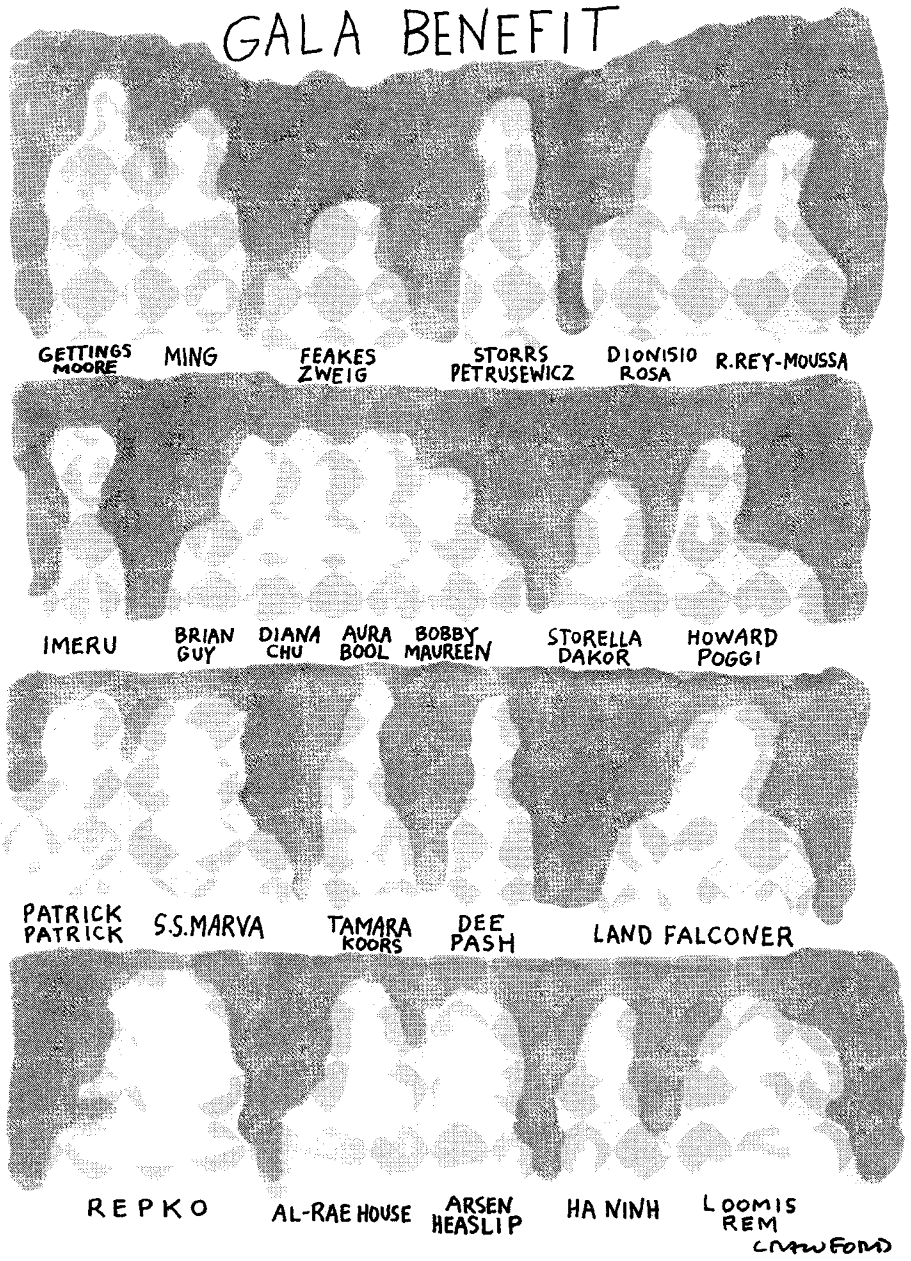
A MAJOR operatic career usually lasts about twenty-five years, but there are a few remarkable exceptions. One of them is the career of the Viennese soprano Leonie Rysanek, who was in town recently to sing two performances of Sieglinde in the Metropolitan Opera's production of "Die Walküre"—a role she first performed in 1951—and to appear at Carnegie Hall in a concert version of Janáček's "Jenůfa." At sixty-one, Miss Rysanek is still one of the great singing actresses of the postwar generation, and a few days before the "Walküre" performances we arranged to watch her rehearse (this production was new to her) and found her mesmerizing the Metropolitan staff. When Miss Rysanek walked out on the main stage, eight strapping Valkyries who had been practicing their "Hojotoho!"s put down their spears and shields and greeted her with a round of applause. Miss Rysanek is a small, pretty woman with dark-blond hair, bright-blue eyes, and a heart-shaped Slavic face. Acknowledging the Valkyries' compliment with a smile, she got right down to business—checking the irregular steps in the steeply raked set, pacing through her movements with Phebe Berkowitz, the "Walküre" stage director, at her side, and singing her lines mezza voce.

Behind us in the auditorium, James Levine, the Met's artistic director, who was Miss Rysanek's conductor for "Walküre," watched the proceedings with a smile of recognition. We asked when he had first encountered the Rysanek phenomenon, and he told us that he had heard her sing Lady Macbeth in 1959. "I was fifteen years old," he said, "and I still remember the impact of that voice. She is a genuine dramatic soprano, with a huge range—a ringing top and a big, warm sound that doesn't diminish as it goes down the scale—and an equally wide range of dramatic expression. I've worked with her late in her career—on 'Tannhäuser,' 'Elektra,' 'Lohengrin,' 'Parsifal,' and now 'Walküre'—and I'm constantly amazed by her intensity, her ability to communicate emotion, and the incredible vitality that radiates from her stage presence."

After the rehearsal ended, we found Miss Rysanek backstage in her dressing room and asked how her career began. She told us she had entered the operatic world at Innsbruck in 1949. "I was twenty-two and willing to try anything," she said. "That first season, I sang Agathe in 'Der Freischütz,' Gilda in 'Rigoletto,' Desdemona, Brünnhilde, and operettas such as 'The Mikado' and 'Orpheus in the Underworld.' I always had a naturally big voice, and there were two things I never had to fight for—the high notes and the soft notes. I had some trouble with my middle voice, but people said, 'Don't push it, because you'll lose your top notes. Wait, and it will develop when you're thirty-five or forty.' And they were right." In 1951, only two years after her début, Miss Rysanek was catapulted onto the international scene when she sang her first Sieglinde, in the "Ring" cycle that reopened the Bayreuth Festival. "It was a big success, and I had offers from all over Europe," she said. "But Wieland Wagner, who had engaged me for Bayreuth, didn't want me to repeat the role the following summer. He was a very controlled, intellectual director, and I think my Sieglinde was too passionate for him. So he offered me Brangäne in 'Tristan'—a smaller role that was much too low for my voice. I cried and screamed and we had a big fight, and I didn't return to Bayreuth until the late nineteen-fifties." By that time, Miss Rysanek was established as a dramatic soprano equally at home in the German and the Italian repertory. "With Karajan in Vienna, I sang Tosca and Aida as well as Wagner and Strauss," she said, "and I think that some of my success in Wagner comes from the fact that I sing his music legato, with an Italian-trained voice. In 1956, I made my American début, in San Francisco, with 'Der Fliegende Holländer.' The following season, I did Turandot and Ariadne there, and also Lady Macbeth—I had only a short time to learn the role in Italian after Callas cancelled." Two years later, Miss Rysanek arrived at the Metropolitan Opera in that role (Callas had cancelled again), and she has sung with the company ever since.

Miss Rysanek told us, with disarming frankness, that she had gone through a very public vocal crisis in the sixties. "My first marriage was breaking up, and suddenly I found that nothing came easily—the middle wobbled, and even the top didn't seem to be very good anymore," she said. "I was afraid to go onstage. If it hadn't been for Rudolf Bing, who said 'If you leave now, you'll never come back,' I would have retired. I was lucky, because I was only in my thirties. I fell in love and got married again—to Elu Gausmann, a journalist. I worked hard on technique, and my voice came back slowly. One day in 1961, during a matinée here at the Metropolitan when I was singing Chrysothemis to Inge Borkh's Elektra, I suddenly began to like the sound of my voice again. And, strangely enough, I came back with a stronger middle and low register. I still have an easy high C, but now I can sing contralto parts as well."

We asked Miss Rysanek what the future might hold for her, and she said that she had given up most of her big roles, because they were physically exhausting. "I can still sing some of them, but I get tired," she said. "So I'm taking on new parts that are shorter: Kostelnička in 'Jenůfa,' Kabanicha in Janáček's 'Kát'a Kabanová,' Klytemnestra in 'Elektra,' and Herodias in 'Salome'—all of them strong women, who are challenging to me as an actress. One reason I'm still here is that Birgit Nilsson, who is a good friend, was such a fabulous Isolde, Brünnhilde, and Elektra that I never dared to try those killer roles in a big house. Not long ago, when I saw Birgit, who has retired from opera, in Vienna, I said, 'You know, I have you to thank for my long career, because you kept me from singing the three roles that would have ruined my voice.' She smiled, and said, 'Don't mention it.' "



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Bridge

THE Williamsburg Bridge, if it's not exactly falling down, doesn't inspire confidence these days—cables are corroding, the foundation has ten-foot cracks—and, in a contest sponsored by the Department of Transportation, architects and engineers from seven or eight countries have submitted plans for replacing or repairing it. One idea is to build a new bridge and put a glass-enclosed restaurant in one of the towers. Another scheme involves building *two* new bridges, on either side of the existing bridge, demolishing the old bridge, and then sliding the others together. Last week, after all the plans were presented to the public, we called Victor Ross, who is a spokesman for the city's Department of Transportation, and asked what he thought might actually be done.

"So the bridge is made of ungalvanized steel, and it's corroding," Mr. Ross said. "There are parts of *me* that are corroding, and I'm still serviceable. But talk to Sam Schwartz. I can separate fact from rumor, and eliminate total conjecture, but Sam Schwartz is more succinct."

Mr. Schwartz, who is lanky and bearded, and, even in a three-piece suit, has an outdoorsy look, is the first deputy commissioner of transportation and the department's chief engineer. "A week does not pass that I don't visit the bridge," he told us at the United Engineering Center, on East Forty-seventh Street, where the plans were on display. "I listen to the bridge. It should be quiet. This bridge is noisy. I *know* this bridge. I've been stuck on it. I've had to crawl up the underbelly of this bridge."

We asked if he could tell us something about the bridge's history.

"The Williamsburg Bridge was

built on a dare," he said. "The Brooklyn Bridge opened in 1883, and four years later the people of New York said, 'We want a *bigger* bridge, in half the time, and cheaper.' So the builders had to cheat. It doesn't have suspended side spans. The steel wires in the cables aren't galvanized—that's why it's corroding. But the bridge is four and a half feet longer than the Brooklyn Bridge, it came in nine hundred thousand dollars cheaper, and it took six years less to build. It opened on December 19, 1903, and even then there was obviously something wrong. The plaque didn't have the transportation commissioner's name on it. Commissioners love to put their names on things, but the commissioner at the time, Gustav Lindenthal, didn't want his name on that bridge."

Mr. Schwartz shook his head, and went on, "And on July 19, 1911, Mayor William Gaynor made a mistake that may end up costing the Williamsburg its life. He took the tolls off the bridge, and it became an orphan. At one time, there were a hundred people caring for it. Now there are three, because there's no toll revenue to pay for its maintenance. A bridge is a machine. It moves, it sways, it *breathes*. We have to lubricate the Williamsburg, because in places it's frozen and doesn't move. And so now we find ourselves in a situation where two sixty-pound iron bars can fall into the water and leave a dangerous hole. That happened in May of last year. We were lucky—the only casualty was a reporter interviewing the Mayor and me on the bridge. One of his legs fell through, and the Mayor pulled him out."

We asked Mr. Schwartz what, if anything, could be done now to save the bridge.

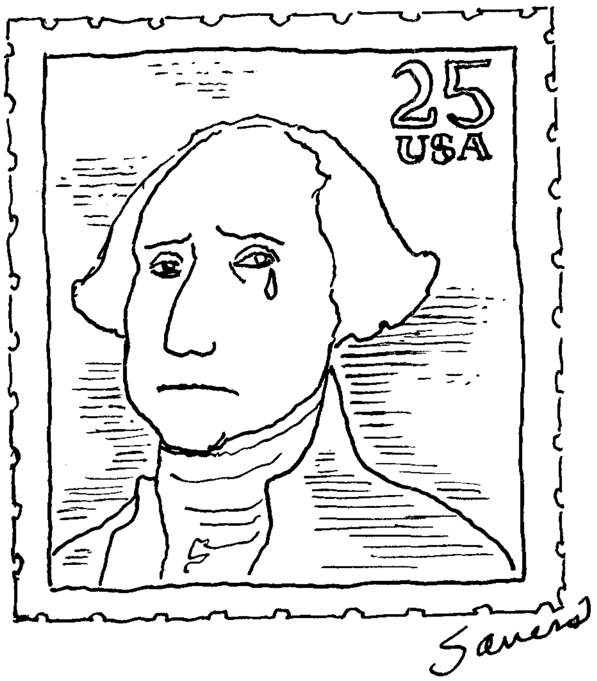
"Well, the most vulnerable part of it is the cables," he said. "They're nineteen inches in diameter, and each is made up of seven thousand six hundred and ninety-six wires. We're trying a fatigue test: a machine pulls and relaxes a cable ten million times, to see when it breaks. We have computers measuring the pitch of the bridge—the cables are like guitar strings, and they're off key. We've had helicopters measuring the sag. We've had lasers pointed at certain sections of the bridge to see how much it rises and falls. You may not believe this, but in the middle of the night, when there are no trains, and very little traffic, the bridge rises a foot." After a pause, he said, "I *love* bridges. I love *this* bridge. Way up on one tower—what may be one of the hardest places to get to in New York City—is a physics formula. It says '$E = h \div \lambda + \phi$.' Up there, someone had a great gestalt!"

We asked what the formula meant.

"I don't know. It's a mystery. The question now is: What is the life of this bridge? I'm the chairman of the Williamsburg Bridge Technical Advisory Committee, which will make a recommendation July 1st on whether to save the old bridge or build a new one, so I can't discuss my feeling about what the ultimate outcome may be, but I will tell you that these days when I pass under the Williamsburg Bridge I almost feel as if it were talking to me. It recognizes me. It *knows* me. It knows it's no longer an orphan." Mr. Schwartz took a deep breath.

"Do you have a contingency plan, in case the bridge falls down before you fix it?" asked a burly man in a plaid shirt who was standing nearby.

Mr. Schwartz said that the bridge was not about to fall down. "I can show you more problems," he added. "I can take you to the Manhattan Bridge and show you worse conditions. I can take you all over this city—to the other bridges over the East River, to the bridges that cross the Hudson and the Harlem, and to the bridges over the highways. You know about the Van Wyck, where a slab of roadway fell four inches when its brackets gave way, and about the hole in the Gowanus Expressway? Had we taken care of these bridges, we would have been preparing for the centennial of the Williamsburg Bridge, and not for its funeral."



Breakfast at Tiffany's

O.K., so it was lunch. Big deal. It might as well have been breakfast. We got there at eleven-fifty-five, and all we'd had to eat since we woke up was a Kellogg's Pop-Tart. As your mom used to say, you call *that* breakfast? Tiffany's had invited us for lunch to see some old jewelry that the staff had assembled for a show of gems and jewelry at the American Museum of Natural History celebrating Tiffany's hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary. But Tiffany's senior gemologist, Peter Schneirla, and the Tiffany archivist, Janet Zapata, wanted to show us the jewelry first and eat afterward. They were excited, because they don't often get to look at a lot of old Tiffany jewelry. Peter sees a lot of old jewelry—what's called "estate" jewelry—but most of it doesn't come from Tiffany's. People keep their Tiffany jewelry. Although there is a Tiffany look and a Tiffany tradition, Tiffany's can't just reach into the vault and pull out some stuff and give it to the museum to display, because if the stuff had stayed in the vault to begin with, Tiffany's would not have become the Tiffany's we know today. Instead, it would probably have disappeared, and become another great big building with a funny top and a pretentious expense-account restaurant on the ground floor which nonetheless serves a pretty good risotto.

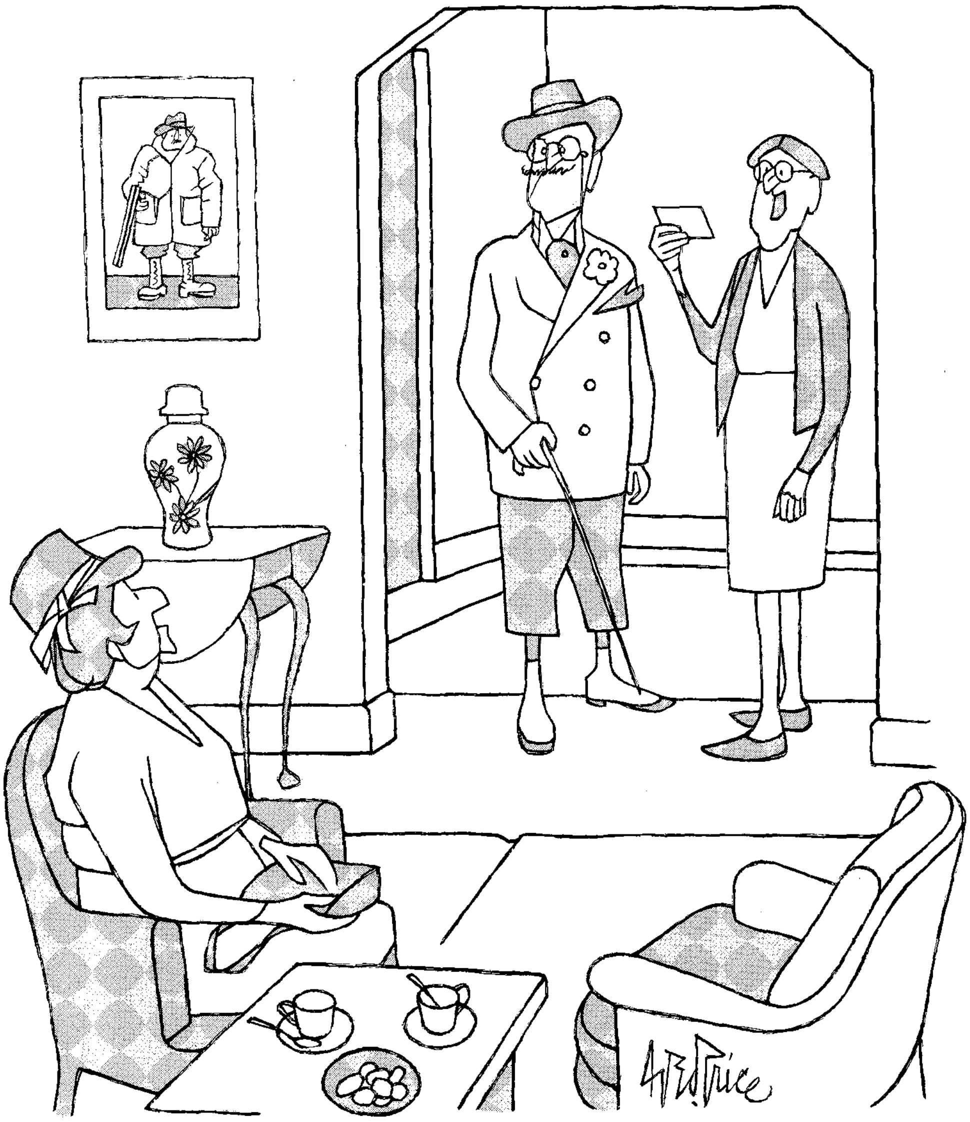
"We've had to borrow jewelry—really beg for it—from collectors and from people who've kept it in the family," Janet said just after we were ushered into a carpeted display salon on the mezzanine. A young man came to take orders for drinks (but didn't offer peanuts or potato chips, or anything, probably because they would leave crumbs on the velvet inside the vitrines).

Here are some key facts we learned before lunch:

—When gemologists refer to the Big Four, they are talking about diamonds, sapphires, rubies, and emeralds. One of the important things that Tiffany's has done in the past hundred and fifty years is to expand America's gemstone horizons beyond the Big Four. This is mostly because of Dr. George Frederick Kunz, who became a vice-president of Tiffany's in 1907, made American gemstones acceptable as jewelry. He popularized Montana sapphires, American freshwater pearls, and Maine tourmalines, among others. He showed these gems at various international exhibitions in Paris, in cases of cherry, maple, Alaska cypress, or California redwood lined with moose or reindeer skin. Tiffany people still have enough of the Kunz spirit in them to make it sound as if the sight of a Montana sapphire in a reindeer-skin case must have had a healthy, shaming effect on Parisians, like reading Fenimore Cooper. Kunzite, a variety of spodumene, was named after him. Kunz collected diamonds, and J. P. Morgan bought his collection for the American Museum of Natural History. They were on display there until 1964, when Murf the Surf stole them.

—The word "carat" is derived from a Greek word meaning carob seed. (Carob is the plant used to make that chocolate substitute which coats those protein bars your girlfriend eats.) A typical carob seed weighs almost exactly one-fifth of a gram—one carat—and it became the standard measure of gem weights in the days when everything was weighed on balance scales and jewellers needed a tiny, constant weight. Peter, who is as skeptical as a man ought to be who sees the world through a jeweller's loupe, once broke open a carob pod to determine if the seeds would really give good weights. "They turned out to be very consistent," he says.

—In the late nineteenth century, Tiffany's made jewelry in the shape of orchids. They were not necessarily worn—just handed around and admired. Kenneth Clark swears in his autobiography that when he visited America half a century ago rich women would come to the table with their hands full of jewels and crowd them around their placemats before they started eating their rich, delicious dinner.



"Saints preserve us! The boulevardier got another jaywalking ticket."

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—Louis Comfort Tiffany, of Tiffany glass, both was and was not connected with the big store. He was the dreamy, aesthetic son of a founder of Tiffany's, and became the art director in 1902. He seems to have been a quiet yet dominant influence on the firm for fourteen years, creating Art Nouveau-style whiplashes of gems. He also ran a factory, independent of the store, where the stained-glass lamps were made. He was—at least, on the evidence of the one brooch of his design that we saw—a kind of genius. This brooch, of emerald-green enamel and baroque pearls, seemed more Impressionist than Nouveau: it was like jewelry made underwater—full of muddied contours and liquid transitions. He once said that his pieces were little missionaries of art trying to convert the Philistines.

We saw some other prize items before lunch, but we were too inexperienced to appreciate them all, or else too hungry to care. A couple of things that did catch our eye were a watch designed for Harry Houdini, with its chain made out of little linked gold handcuffs, and a bracelet of Mexican fire opals that Gypsy Rose Lee's husband had Tiffany's make for her. If you've never seen a Mexican fire opal, you can imagine what one looks like by asking yourself what kind of opal Gypsy Rose Lee would have been if she'd been an opal.

THE LITTLE KNIFE

ONE Saturday in that last, interminable summer before his parents separated and the Washington Senators baseball team was expunged forever from the face of the earth, the Shapiros went to Nags Head, North Carolina, where Nathan, without planning to, perpetrated a great hoax. They drove down I-95, through the Commonwealth of Virginia, to a place called the Sandpiper—a ragged, charming oval of motel cottages painted white and green as the Atlantic, and managed by a kind, astonishingly fat old man named Colonel Larue, who smoked cherry cigars and would, if asked, play catch or keep-away. Outside his office, in the weedy gravel, stood an old red-and-radium-white Coke machine, which dispensed bottles from a vertical glass door that sighed when you opened it, and which reminded Nathan of the Automat his grandmother had taken him to once in New York City. The sight of the faded machine and of the whole Sandpiper—like that of the Automat—filled Nathan with a happy sadness, or, really, a sad happiness; he was not too young, at ten, to have developed a sense of nostalgia, of anticipating that there were things he would ultimately never see again.

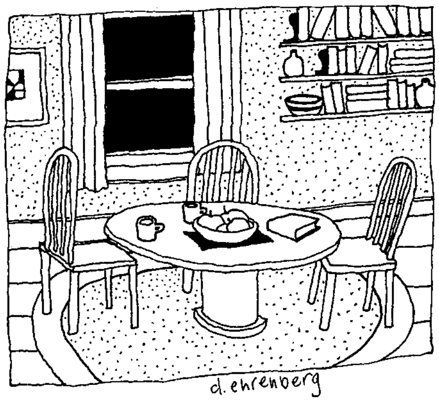
There were children in every cottage—with all manner of floats, pails, paddles, trucks, and flying objects—and his younger brother Ricky, to Nathan's envy, immediately fell in with a gang of piratical little boys with water pistols, who were always reproducing fart sounds and giggling chaotically when their mothers employed certain ordinary words such as "hot dog" and "rubber." The Shapiros went to the ocean every summer, and at the beginning of this trip, as on all those that had preceded it, Nathan and his brother got along better than they usually did, their mother broke out almost immediately in a feathery red heat rash, and their father lay pale and motionless in the sun, like a monument, and always forgot to take off his wristwatch when he went into the sea. Nathan had brought a stack of James Bond books and his colored pencils; there were board games—he and his father were in the middle of their Strat-O-Matic baseball playoffs—and miniature boxes of cereal; the family ate out every single night. But when they were halfway through the slow, dazzling week—which was as far as they were to get—Nathan began to experience an unfamiliar longing: he wanted to go home.

He awoke very early on Wednesday morning, went into the cottage's small kitchen, where the floor was always sticky and the table rocked and trembled, and chose the last of the desirable cereals from the Variety pack, leaving for Ricky only those papery, sour brands with the scientific names—the sort that their grandparents liked. As he began to eat, Nathan heard, from the big bedroom down the hall, the unmistakable, increasingly familiar sound of his father burying his mother under a heap of scorn and ridicule. It was, oddly, a soft and pleading sound. Lately, the conversation and actions of Dr. Shapiro's family seemed to disappoint him terribly. His left hand was always flying up to smack his sad and outraged forehead, so hard that Nathan often thought he could hear his father's wedding ring crack against his skull. When they'd played their baseball game the day before—Nathan's Baltimore Bonfires against his father's Brooklyn Eagles—every decision Nathan made led to a disaster, and his father pointed out each unwise substitution and foolish attempt to steal in this new tone of miserable sarcasm, so that Nathan had spent the afternoon apologizing, and, finally, crying. Now he listened for his mother's voice, for the note of chastened shame.

The bedroom door slammed, and Mrs. Shapiro came out into the kitchen. She was in her bathrobe, a wild, sleepless smile on her face.

"Good morning, honey," she said, then hummed to herself as she boiled water and made a cup of instant coffee. Her spoon tinkled gaily against the cup.

"Where are you going, Mom?" said Nathan. She had taken up her coffee and was heading for the sliding glass door that led out of the kitchen and down to the beach.



"See you, honey," she sang.

"Mom!" said Nathan. He stood up—afraid, absurdly, that she might be leaving for good, because she seemed so happy. After a few seconds he heard her whistling, and he went to the door and pressed his face against the wire screen. His mother had a Disney whistle, melodious and full, like a Scotsman's as he walks across a meadow in a brilliant kilt. She paced briskly along the ramshackle slat-and-wire fence, back and forth through the beach grass, drinking from the huge white mug of coffee and whistling heartily into the breeze; her red hair rose from her head and trailed like a defiant banner. He watched her observe the sunrise—it was going to be a perfect, breezy day—then continued to watch as she set her coffee on the ground, removed her bathrobe, and, in her bathing suit, began to engage in a long series of yoga exercises—a new fad of hers—as though she were playing statues all alone. Nathan was soon lost, with the fervor of a young scientist, in contemplation of his pretty, whistling mother rolling around on the ground.

"Oh, how can she?" said Dr. Shapiro.

"Yes," said Nathan, gravely, before he blushed and whirled around to find his father, in pajamas, staring out at Mrs. Shapiro. His smile was angry and clenched, but in his eyes was the same look of bleak surprise, of betrayal, that had been there when Nathan took out Johnny Sain, a slugging pitcher, and the pinch-hitter, Enos Slaughter, immediately went down on strikes. There were a hundred new things that interested Nathan's mother—bonsai, the Zuni, yoga, real estate—and although Dr. Shapiro had always been a liberal, generous, encouraging man (as Nathan had heard his mother say to a friend), and had at first happily helped her to purchase the necessary manuals, supplies, and coffee-table books, lately each new fad seemed to come as a blow to him—a going astray, a false step.

"How can she?" he said again, shaking his big bearded head.

"She says it's really good for you," said Nathan.

His father smiled down on his son ruefully, and tapped him once on the head. Then he turned and went to the refrigerator, hitching up his pajama bottoms. They were the ones patterned with a blue stripe and red chevrons—

the ones that Nathan always imagined were the sort worn by the awkward, doomed elephant in the Groucho Marx joke.

LATER that day, as they made egg-salad sandwiches to carry down to the beach, Dr. and Mrs. Shapiro fought bitterly, for the fifth time since their arrival. In the cottage's kitchen was a knife—a small, new, foreign knife, which Mrs. Shapiro admired. As she used it to slice neat little horseshoes of celery, she praised it again. "Such a good little knife," she said. "Why don't you just take it?" said Dr. Shapiro. The air in the kitchen was suddenly full of sharp, caramel smoke, and Dr. Shapiro ran to unplug the toaster.

"That would be stealing," said Nathan's mother, ignoring her husband's motions of alarm and the fact that their lunch was on fire. "We are not taking this knife, Martin."

"Give it to me." Dr. Shapiro held out his hand, palm up.

"I'm not going to let you—make me—dishonest anymore!" said his mother. She seemed to struggle, at first, not to finish the sentence she had begun, but in the end she turned, put her face right up to his, and cried out boldly. After her outburst, both adults turned to look, with a simultaneity that was almost funny, at their sons. Nathan hadn't the faintest notion of what his mother was talking about.

"Don't steal, Dad," Ricky said.

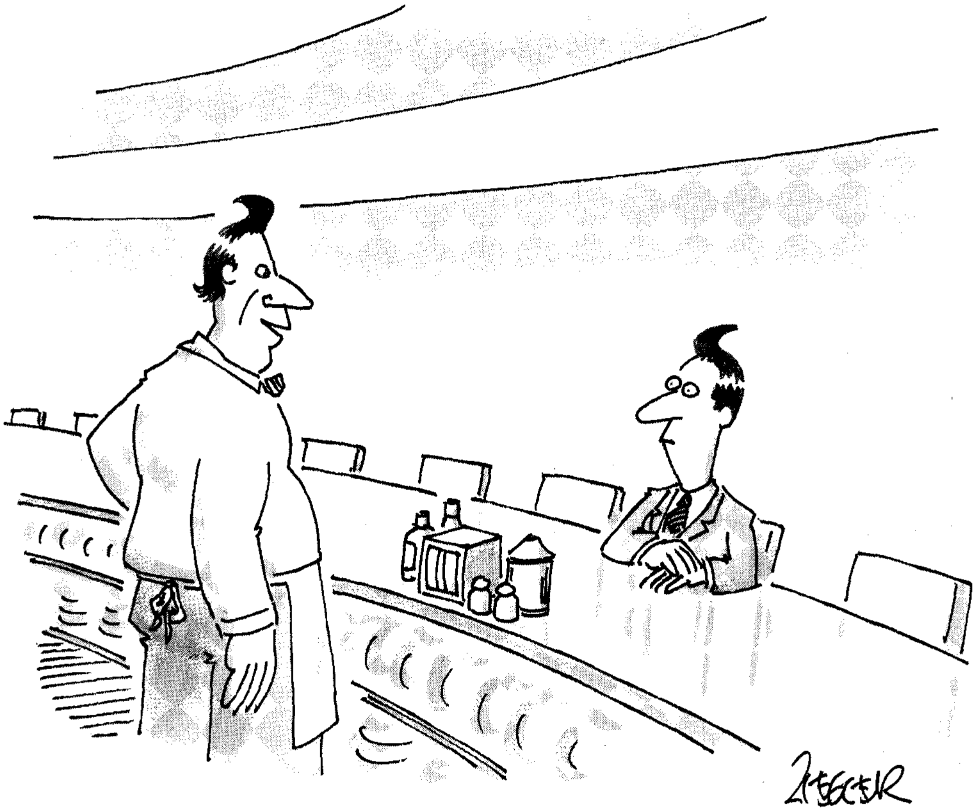
"I only wanted it to extract the piece of toast," said their father. He was looking at their mother again. "God damn it." He turned and went out of the kitchen.

Her knuckles white around the handle of the knife, their mother freed the toast and began scraping the burnt surfaces into the sink. Because their father had said "God damn," Ricky wiggled his eyebrows and smiled at Nathan. At the slamming of the bedroom door, Nathan clambered up suddenly from the rickety kitchen table as though he had found an insect crawling on his leg.

"Kill it!" said Ricky. "What is it?"

"What is it?" said his mother. She scanned Nathan's body quickly, one hand half raised to swat.

"Nothing," said Nathan. He took off his glasses. "I'm going for a walk."



"What'll it be, handsome?"

When he got to the edge of the water, he turned to look toward the Sandpiper. At that time in Nags Head there were few hotels and no condominiums, and it seemed to Nathan that their little ring of cottages stood alone, like Stonehenge, in the middle of a giant wasteland. He set off down the beach, watching his feet print and following the script left in the sand by the birds for which the motel was named. He passed a sand castle, then a heart drawn with a stick enclosing the names Jimmy and Beth. Sometimes his heels sank deeply into the sand, and he noticed the odd marks this would leave—a pair of wide dimples. He discovered that he could walk entirely on his heels, and his trail became two lines of big periods. If he took short steps, it looked as though a creature—a bird with two peg legs—had come to fish along the shore.

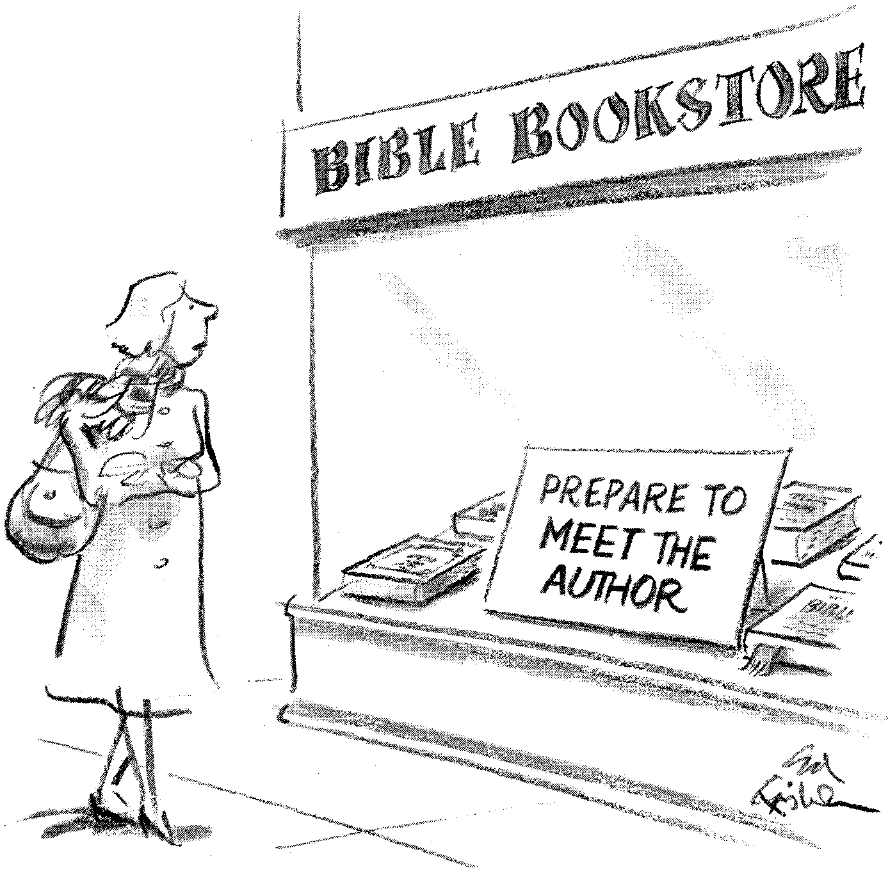
He lurched a long way in this fashion, watching his feet, and nearly forgot his parents' quarrel. But when at last he grew bored with walking on his heels and turned to go back, he saw that his mother and father had also decided to take a walk, and that they were, in fact, coming toward him—clasping hands, letting go, clasping hands again. Nathan ran to meet them, and they parted to let him walk between them. They all continued down the beach, stooping to pick up shells, glass, dead crabs, twine, and all the colored or smelly things that Nathan had failed to take note of before. At first his parents exclaimed with him over these discoveries, and his father took each striped seashell into his hands, to keep it safe, until there were two dozen and they jingled there like money. But after a while they seemed to lose interest, and Nathan found himself walking a few feet ahead of them, stooping alone, glumly dusting his toes with sand as he tried to eavesdrop on their careless and incomprehensible conversation.

"Never again," his mother said at last.

Dr. Shapiro let the shells fall. He rubbed his hands together and then stared at them as though waking from a dream in which he had been holding a fortune in gold. Straightening up so quickly that his head spun, Nathan let out a cry and pointed down at the sand beneath their feet, among the scattered shells. "Look at those weird tracks!" he cried.

They all looked down.

Speculation on the nature of the beast that went toeless down the shore went on for several minutes, and although Nathan was delighted at first, he soon began to feel embarrassed and, obscurely, frightened by the ease with which he had deceived his parents. His treachery was almost exposed when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BIBLE

Ricky, carrying a long stick and wearing a riot of Magic Marker tattoos on his face and all down his arms, ran over to find out what was happening. The little boy immediately tipped back onto his heels, and would have taken a few steps like that had Nathan not grabbed him by the elbow and dragged him aside.

"Why do you have a dog on your face?" said Nathan.

"It's a jaguar," said Ricky.

Nathan bent to whisper into his brother's ear. "I'm tricking Mom and Dad," he said.

"Good," said Ricky.

"They think there's some kind of weird creature on the beach."

Ricky pushed Nathan away and then surveyed their mother and father, who were talking again, quietly, as though they were trying not to alarm their sons. "It can't be real," said Nathan's father.

Ricky's skin under the crude tattoos was tanned, his hair looked stiff and ragged from going unwashed and sea-tangled, and as he regarded their parents he held his skinny stick like a javelin at his side. "They're dumb," he said flatly.

Dr. Shapiro approached, stepping gingerly across the mysterious tracks, and then knelt beside his sons. His face was red, though not from the sun, and he seemed to have trouble looking directly at the boys. Nathan began to cry before his father even spoke.

"Boys," he said. He looked away, then back, and bit his lip. "I'm afraid —I'm sorry. We're going to go home. Your mom and I—don't feel very well. We don't seem to be well."

"No! No! It was Nathan!" said Ricky, laying down his spear and throwing himself into his father's arms. "It wasn't me. Make *him* go home."

Nathan, summoning up his courage, decided to admit that the curious trail of the crippled animal was his, and he said, "I'm responsible."

"Oh, no!" cried both his parents together, startling him. His mother rushed over and fell to her knees, and they took Nathan into their arms and said that it was never, never him, and they ruffled his hair with their fingers, as though he had done something they could love him for.

AFTER they came back from dinner, the Shapiros, save Nathan, went down to the sea for a final, sad promenade. At the restaurant, Ricky had pleaded with his parents to stay through the end of the week—they had not even been to see the monument at Kitty Hawk, the Birthplace of Aviation. For Ricky's sake, Nathan had also tried to persuade them, but his heart wasn't in it—he himself wanted so badly to go home—and the four of them had all ended up crying and chewing their food in the brass-and-rope dining room of the Port O' Call; even Dr. Shapiro had shed a tear. They were going to leave that night. Nathan's family now stood, in sweatshirts, by the sliding glass door, his parents straining to adopt hard and impatient looks, and Nathan saw that they felt guilty about leaving him behind in the cottage.

"I'll pack my stuff," he said. "Just go." For a moment his stomach tightened with angry, secret glee as his mother and father, sighing, turned their backs on him and obeyed his small command. Then he was alone in the kitchen again, for the second time that day, and he wished that he had gone to look at the ocean, and he hated his parents, uncertainly, for leaving him behind. He got up and walked into the bedroom that he and Ricky had shared. There, in the twilight that fell in orange shafts through the open window, the tangle of their clothes and bedsheets, their scattered toys and books, the surfaces of the broken dresser and twin headboards seemed dusted with a film of radiant sand as though the tide had washed across them and withdrawn, and the room was strewn with the seashells they had found. Nathan, after emptying his shoebox of baseball cards into his suitcase, went slowly around the room and harvested the shells with careful sweeps of his trembling hand. Bearing the shoebox back into the kitchen, he collected the few stray shards of salt-white and green beach glass that lay in a pile beside the electric can opener, and then added a hollow pink crab's leg in whose claw Ricky had fixed a colored pencil. When Nathan saw the little knife in the drainboard by the sink, he hesitated only a moment before dropping it into the box, where it swam, frozen, like a model shark in a museum diorama of life beneath the sea. Nathan chuckled. As clearly as if he were remembering them, he foresaw his mother's accusation, his father's enraged denial, and with an unhappy chuckle he foresaw, recalled, and fondly began to preserve all the discord for which, in his wildly preserving imagination, he was and would always be responsible.

—MICHAEL CHABON

BITTERWATER

I'M not the sort of person who takes satisfaction in being scared to death. Some like it. They'll go to horror films for pleasure. I can't understand that. I've walked out of nearly every horror film I've gone to. My dad says life is scary enough; he tells war stories about being an Air Force navigator in World War II, how nothing you can imagine actually feels like being up in the air—no boundaries but air, and the bullets coming at you are real. But after I lived a bit with Manny, I thought he *could* imagine it and better. Maybe he had something wrong with him. He was always on edge, like his whole person was this fighter plane with air boundaries and the bullets coming at him were real.

I married Manny when I was eighteen, and it broke my dad's heart. Manny got in my head right away, from practically the first minute my family moved to the Navajo Reservation. I was thirteen. A bunch of us would play softball next to the mining-company housing project. My dad was foreman at the mill where they processed uranium ore. The company mined uranium all over the reservation. Manny wasn't a company kid, but he'd come over anyway with his friends. Manny pitched. I would come up to bat, and Manny would stand on the mound chewing gum, singing crazy country-and-Western songs—"Might as well go to Tennessee," he'd say—and not throw the ball until I was rolling on the ground. Manny could make me laugh.

"It's strike two hundred and three," he'd say. He kept count of all the strikes he'd ever gotten on me.

"You cheat," I'd say.

Manny would walk right up to me in the batter's box. He'd say, "I'm hurt now. You have hurt me very bad, and you have hurt my ancestors. Do you know who my ancestors are?" Manny was Todacheene clan, which means Bitterwater. He told me Manuelito was Bitterwater, too, and that Manuelito was the last great Navajo chief, and that he, Manny, had been named for Manuelito—he had a great chief in his background, and now a great chief's feelings were hurt. "The only thing to do," he would say, "is to get some money from your dad so we can go get a hamburger."

My dad would never give me more than enough for one hamburger. He'd say, "That boy's got money. The government gives them money."

Manny would say to me, "That's all right. You buy the one, and you can watch me eat."

Watching Manny eat was a thing. This was a wide, pancake-sized hamburger—a skinny sliver of gray meat with two tiny dots of pickle and a squirt of mustard packed between two fat buns. I mean, a reservation hamburger is mostly bread. But watching Manny eat— He's got these magic fingers that would lace together over the top of bread like they were comfortable there. He's got his elbows propped on the table and a loose hug on this hamburger, and he looks happy—a boy with an appetite and the time to enjoy it. The way he watched me over that bread—and talked non-stop—and sort of just chewed at the same time, and smiled, and never offered me a bite. The way his jaw worked, man-sized muscles popping near his ears—some secret jaw action communicating something to the brain, and from the look in his eyes it could've been something dirty, like that meal was an illegal thing. I mean, he knew how to get a girl's attention.

One night he called me on the phone. "Hey, Brenda, you know who this is?"

"Yeah, I know who this is."

"This is Manuelito, in case you don't know."

"I already know," I said.

He wanted to know what I was doing, and then he wanted to know what my dad was doing.

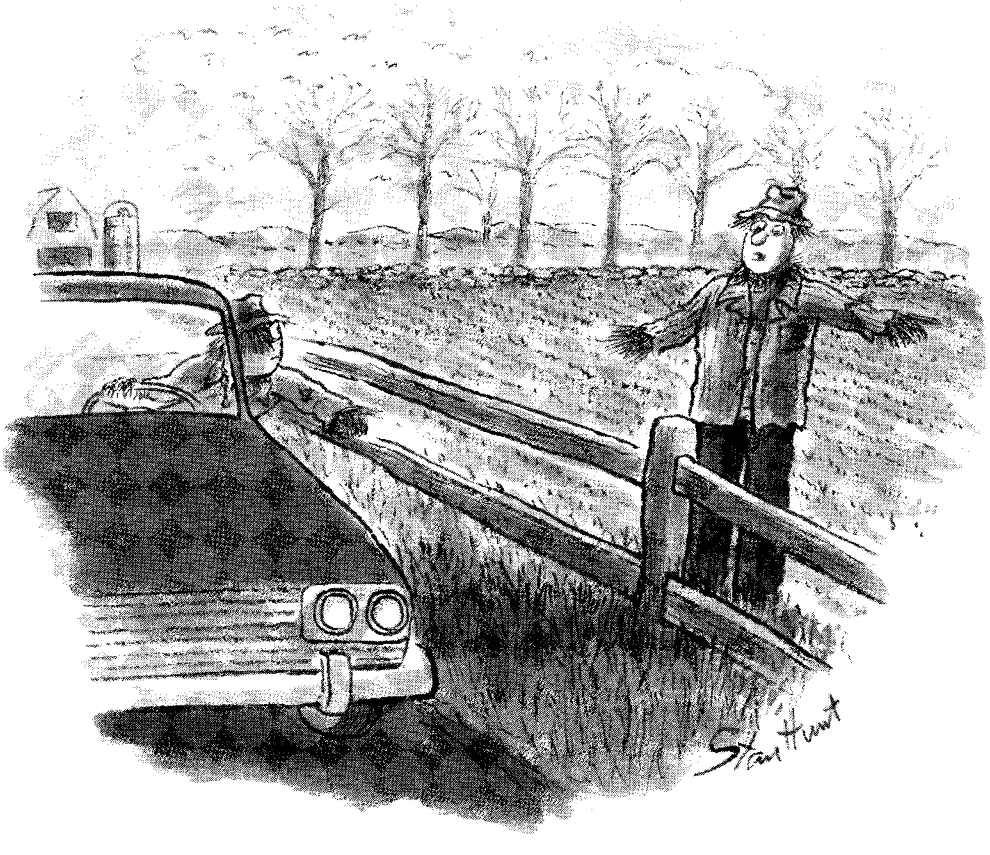
What my dad was doing was being a stone in his chair. My mother had been asking him her favorite question. "Do I get a vote at all," she'd want to know, "or am I just here as part of the scenery?" The stone would ask my mother why she always had to have the upper hand. "Look at me," my mother would say. "I'm a tree."

"You don't listen," my father would say.

I told Manny my father was being a talking stone.

Manny asked me if he had a liquor cabinet.

That night was the first time Manny and I broke into my dad's liquor cabinet. What I did was sneak him into the garage. My dad had converted a quarter of the garage into a playroom. I sneaked Manny in when



"One mile straight ahead. You can't miss it."

everybody else was asleep, and we listened to KWYK, and drank, and sort of played on the couch.

"Nobody knows I'm here," he said. "We won't get caught." He sang along with the radio—"Don't let me cross over love's cheating line"—and I'm laughing, you know, and Manny is trying to find his way through my clothes, and what are you going to do? He had this way of getting around me.

But then once my dad walked in on us—I guess maybe I didn't have a shirt on—and Dad was pale, like he was seeing a ghost, and he kicked Manny out and told me I was grounded for the rest of my life. Manny wasn't afraid of my dad. He joked when he left, and my dad heard it—"Hey, Brenda, if you ever get off the ground again, come on over."

WHEN I married Manny, I figured my dad would come around sooner or later. Eventually he did, and he gave Manny a job at the mill. Manny worked the graveyard shift, eleven to seven. Dad said that after he proved himself he could work days. Manny said he didn't mind the grave. Dad said Manny had an attitude problem. I told Dad that he said things like that as a joke. Dad told me to tell Manny that he better not find him drinking up there.

Manny may not have minded the graveyard shift, but he minded graveyards, real graveyards. That was one thing Manny was afraid of. Like a kid, he'd spook himself about graveyards, and I liked to tease him on this —just to goad him a little, since he always thought he was such a man— and told him graveyard stories just so he wouldn't look me in the eye. When I was a kid, right after we moved to the reservation, I was on the bluffs with some others and we found this old graveyard and went in. We were walking around in there and my foot fell in. The ground was rotten, and my foot fell in one of the graves. I told Manny this story and pretended that my foot actually touched a casket. Then I asked him if he wanted to see where that graveyard was, and I was surprised, because he said he did.

It was pretty run down and fenced off, but you could lift the barbed wire and climb in. It was cold that day— November, I think—and the sand was blowing, that fine grit that gets between your teeth. The Navajo graveyards are unkempt places, full of tumbleweed. There were no headstones but wooden crosses here and there, and in two or three places plastic flowers. I didn't think anybody was buried there anymore. You couldn't tell who had been buried there, because there were no names on the crosses. When we were kids, we joked about robbing those graves—we played cops and robbers on the bluffs—and we believed that if anyone actually did rob an Indian grave he would get something. They usually buried people with all their wealth—jewelry and blankets, and so on. But stepping in that one grave really did scare me. "I thought I touched bone," I told Manny the day we went up there. I hadn't been up there since I was thirteen.

GOODBYE

Upstairs, a man is writing a screenplay about assassins
Who shrink to the size of pills and travel the pipes and drains

Of our city, from embassy to embassy, extinguishing conflicts.
A hope, I suppose, derived from evenings soaking alone in a tub.

Downstairs, a solemn pair residents call *the flesh eaters* pack and go,
Taking their notorious dog, who howled ballads from Hell.

I find myself on the stoop explaining your death to an eight-year-old
Who's been storing your favorite ice cream in her freezer for weeks.

"But how will he come back?" she asks, mildly annoyed.
The sad insufficiencies of transportation drop clues all around us . . .

Not subways. Not planes. Not trucks nuzzling fenders near the emeralds
And rubies of traffic lights. Not buses, those elephants

Of the New World, toting the moderately intrepid like pangs of emotion,
Their sides plastered with advice.

Poor you if you've wound up in some ethereal jungle.
But, then again, poor you if Heaven is too much like what we already know:

A roadless place on a map of dust where everything vanishes without
Explanation—the capital I of your body laid out beneath

The uninformed chatter of leaves, cloth of your skin unweaving,
Tumbled poles of your bones, no longer animated argument of your lungs

Merely a fragrance now, and soon not even that.
Better that you go where perfect sentences take up the letters

Of your name, and the agonizing softness of what was once your weight
Becomes the tint of your unhurried soul,

While here professors of dread and remorse speak of you
Endlessly, by heart.

—VICKIE KARP

• •

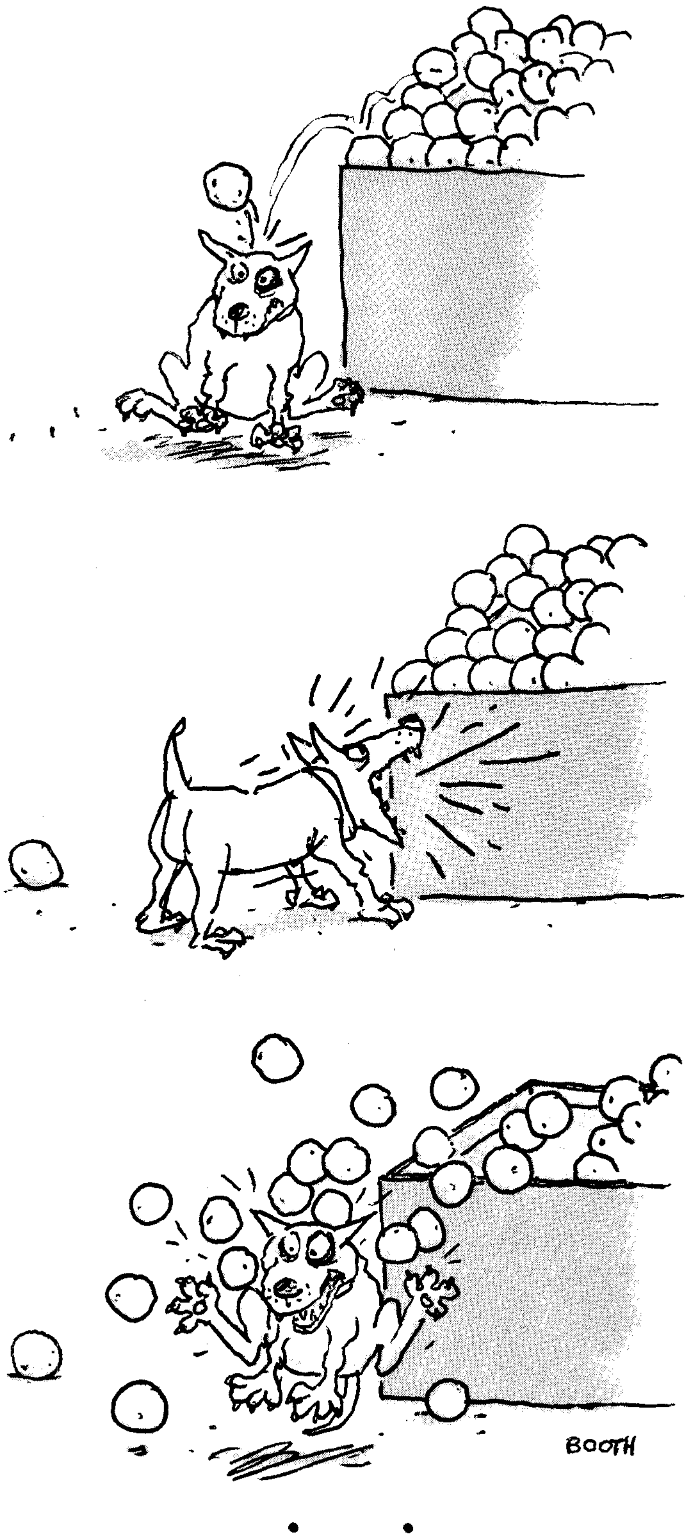
Anne Burgess

"You could have broken a leg," he said.

"I know it."

"You ever seen those old Navajo women that limp around?" he said. "My grandmother limps. Some say it's because they used to break a girl's hip when she was a baby so that no one could sell her as a servant to the Spanish later on."

"That's cruel, that they could break a baby's hip," I said.



"It was cruel," he said. "I don't know who came up with that idea. I hate it that they broke my grandmother's hip. But I would break yours."

"Sure."

"Why don't you run across that graveyard for me?"

"You're crazy," I said.

Manny put his boot on one strand of the barbed-wire fence. He pulled another up with his hands, making a gap big enough for a person to enter.

"You want to," he said. Manny wasn't teasing. He was like that. One minute he was joking around, the next this stranger. His face was pasty, almost white, like he had painted it.

"I don't want to," I said.

He said, "Run across the fucking graveyard, or I'll break your fucking hip."

You know, there's no place else to go, really, up there. It's just a row of bluffs, sand pile after sand pile, maybe a child on a horse and the child's sheepdogs, which will tear you limb from limb. Up on the bluffs there's no place, really, to go.

"It's just a game," he said, and didn't care that I didn't want to but pushed me through the barbed wire, and a barb ripped my arm.

Once, when we were making love, Manny stopped and said, "You know, I could take your clothes and put you outside, and then everybody would see you. You want everybody to see you?"

I felt so cold when he said that. I didn't want him to touch me anymore, and I pushed him away and said I didn't want to finish it. Manny thought this was hilarious. He lay on his back and laughed at the ceiling until I tried to choke him, and he thought that was even funnier, and I laughed right back until I was almost dead with screaming at him.

That day on the bluffs I felt as though he'd put me naked on the other side of the door. I was afraid of him that day, so all I wanted to do was turn around, walk through the barbed wire, through him, through the whole damn reservation, but he twisted me around and whispered, "Run or I'll break your fucking hip."

I walked. Manny yelled, "Do I have to come in there?" and then I couldn't move. Manny yelled, "Jump." I'm standing in the middle of this graveyard. My husband is telling me to jump up and down. He says he wants to see if I'll fall through.

I sat down, right there in the middle of that graveyard. I knew that he wouldn't come in after me. I knew that Manny was too afraid of something in there to come after me. I thought I was safe sitting on those Indian graves.

HE hated to be alone, so the graveyard shift was a bad idea. I guess he was spoiled in that way. He needed a lot of attention. There was nobody to perform for up there at the mill, in the middle of the night—just the yellowcake roasters, usually, and Manny. He got a little crazy when he had to be alone. Like, he came home from work one morning, put both hands on my face, and said, "Brenda, do you think you're flesh and blood?" I could smell he had been drinking.

I said, "My dad'll fire you if he catches you drinking on the job."

"What do you think is flesh and blood if not you, Brenda?"

I told him I thought he should get a day job. That he wasn't around people enough, the way he had to sleep during the days and didn't talk to anybody at night.

"Oh, I talk," he said. "You know what uranium is?"

I knew what uranium was.

"There's a thousand little bombs going off in those furnaces every night and we have us some discussions. We talk about you, sweetheart. You're the main thing on my mind, you know that?" He hadn't just been drinking, he was drunk. "Of course, they don't listen. Here's how it is." He pulls out a kitchen chair and straddles it. "This is me," he says. He points at himself. "This is Furnace One." He points at his right leg. "Imagine it's a metal box with uranium inside, and the fire's going sixteen hundred degrees," he says. He starts stomping with the foot. "This is Furnace Two." He points at the left leg. "Imagine it's a metal box." He starts stomping with that foot. He's got both feet hammering against the kitchen floor, making a racket. Then he starts speaking in Navajo, looking at the ceiling. There's a lot of noise in that kitchen.

"I listen to you," I yell at him. "Who else am I going to listen to? You want all the goddam attention."

He said, "Let's go to bed."

I told him I didn't want to.

He told me a man needed sex. But I didn't want to.

He got like that. But, too, he was a charmer. You have to love a man like that and mostly not mind his moods. When we were still kids, just married, Manny came home from work one morning with a pink bird under his arm—one of those plastic things you see in people's yards—and I had seen this particular plastic bird in the high-school principal's yard forever. Manny had stolen it on his way home from work. He put it in the middle of the kitchen table, and the bird had breakfast with us. Manny said, "Baby, I brought you the stork."

I said, "Manny, that's a pelican."

He said, "It is? I thought it was a stork."

I said, "You better get off this reservation so you can figure out the difference between a pelican and a stork. You better go to a zoo somewhere."

He said, "How are we going to have a baby if this is a pelican?"

I said, "You're my entertainment committee, you know that?"

He said, "Brenda, this is a flamingo."

Well, as soon as he said it I knew that's what it was, and felt a little stupid, and mad at him—at how he was always just playing me—and wouldn't have talked to him all the rest of that morning, but then he comes over and squats in front of me. He puts his elbows on his knees and holds his face like a little boy. He says that maybe we should pawn that flamingo and get a stork, so we could have a baby, and I said, "O.K. by me."

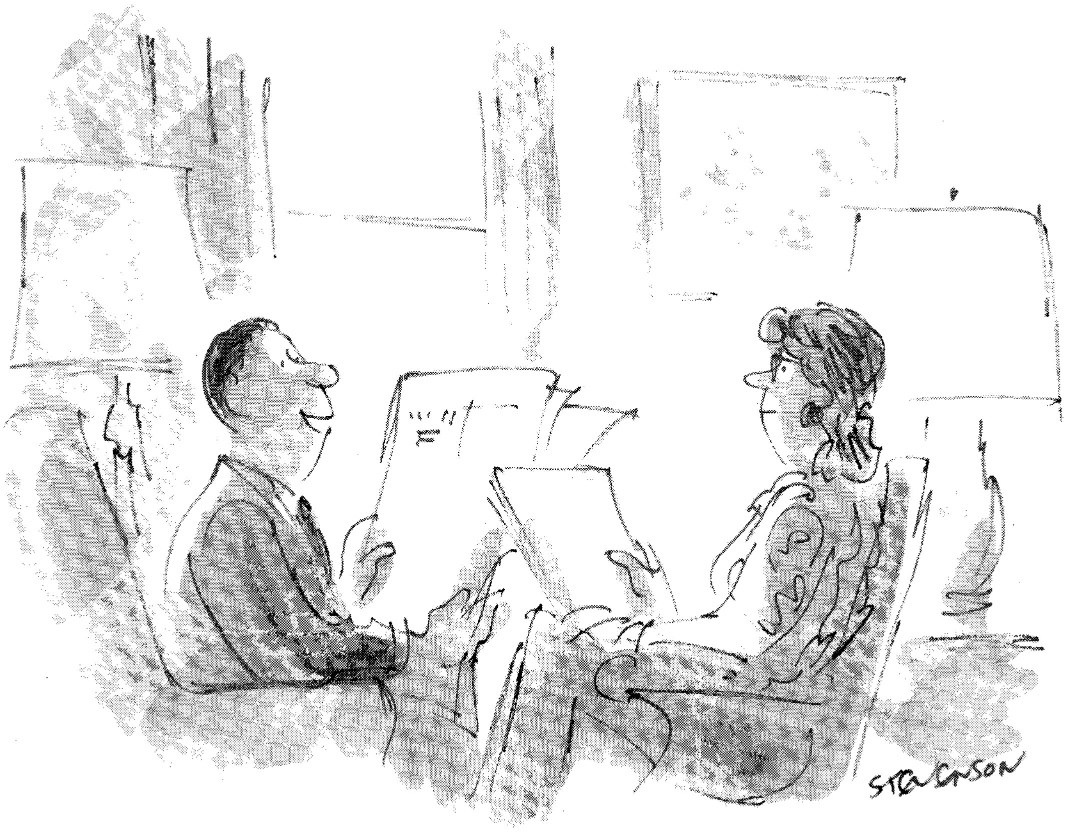
Except when he was drinking, just about anything Manny said was O.K. by me. Not that I'd let him know this. I'm not just a go-along sort of person. What I believe in is timing. I mean, you keep a guy guessing, but the timing has got to be right. This once—we'd been on the reservation a year or so and I thought Manny was starting to like me. I decided to test him. I was supposed to meet him in my front yard, and we were going to get up a game of softball. He was late. I knew he'd expect me to be waiting. What I did was just put the ball in the yard, then I ran in the house. This was so I could see his face when he came to meet me. You know if you're getting to a guy depending on how his face looks when he's expecting to find you someplace but you're not there. I hid behind the curtains in our front room, and after a while Manny shows up. The ball is in the middle of the front lawn. He stands over that ball, then stoops down, picks it up, starts tossing it up, catching it. And he walks off. Like he's found a prize, like that ball was all he was after in the first place. He never glanced at the house.

I figured my timing was off. He didn't like me well enough yet to miss me. And after he left me for good, I figured my timing had been off the whole time I knew Manny and maybe there wasn't such a thing as timing at all.

Manny came home one morning carrying a foreman's white hard hat under his arm. I said, "You get a promotion?"

He said my dad had been for a 3 A.M. visit to the roaster room at the mill and forgot his hat when he left. Manny also said that he thought a man should spend a lot of time with his wife, and from here on we would be spending a lot of time together. Then he went and hung the hard hat on a peg in the living room.

Manny stayed home nights after my dad caught him drinking at the mill. He didn't sleep. He said he couldn't shake that night-shift habit, but I think it



"If you had to give me high marks for something, what would it be?"

was the liquor, the way it keeps you awake. He'd want me to stay up with him to keep him company. "We'll sleep during the day," he'd say. I tried to, but I'm a night sleeper, and anyway Manny didn't sleep day or night. He didn't sleep. I told him I needed to sleep. "Then fucking sleep!" he'd yell, and he'd leave, sometimes for weeks. I'd have nightmares of him splattered on some highway, drunk in front of some off-reservation bar.

One night, I woke up and Manny was sitting by the side of my bed. He'd been gone maybe a month, and at first I was glad to see him, but then I notice he's weird. He's talking to me about the Navajos in the Second World War, how they used Navajo for a code language, and after a while he isn't making any sense. "And Brenda, them Nazis couldn't break it, because it wasn't written—how about that? We never thought to write it down, and my cousin Mae went to Deermont and she said there were no boys—how about that—but she liked it anyway and never came home to the reservation. She went to Paris or Spain drinking tequila— Indians shouldn't drink, Brenda, like your dad says, because we have type-A blood and you have type B. . . ."

I mean, it was weird waking up to his talk, and his eyes were dead—they didn't see me. I didn't think he knew me. I screamed over his gibberish, "Manny, Manny, Manny—Manuelito!"

"Was a drunk," he said. He laughed.

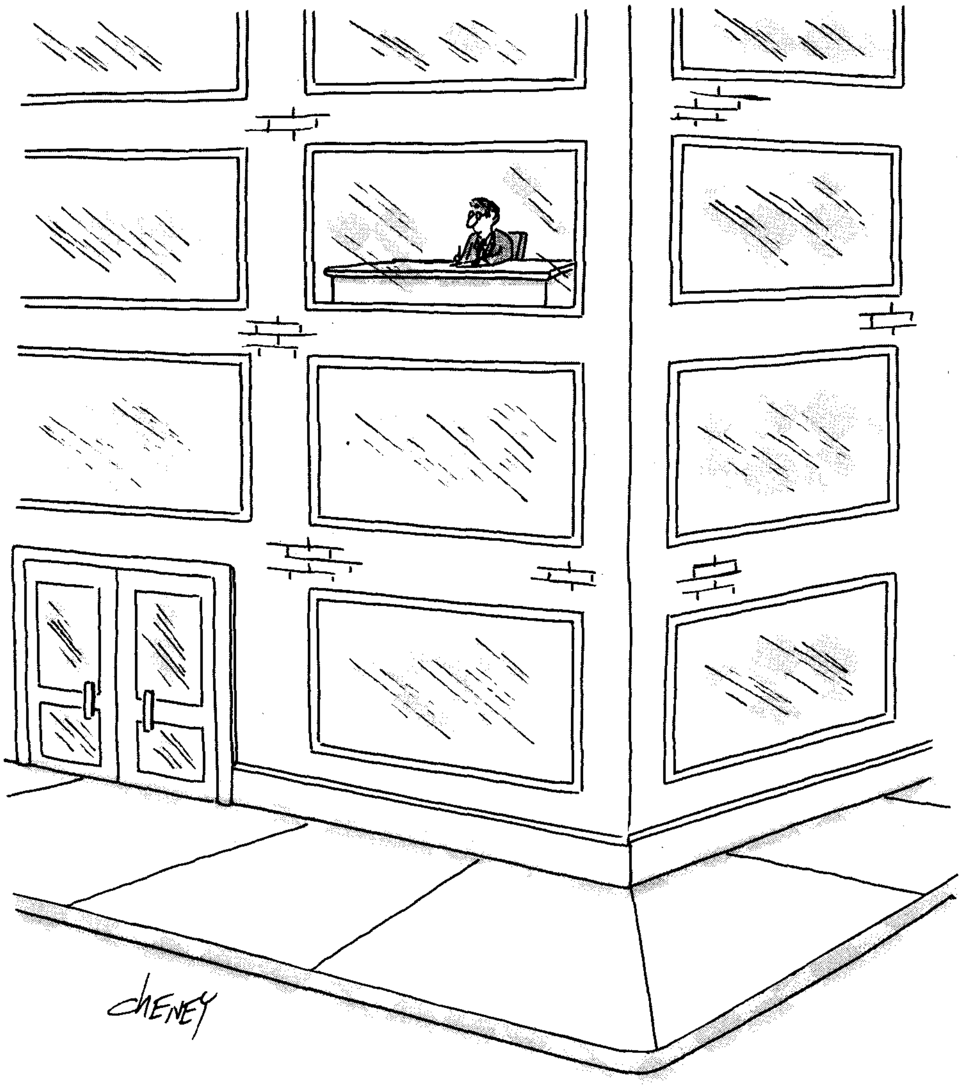
I said, "Manny, why do you drink?"

He said, "To get drunk."

I left the bedroom. He yelled after me, "And I don't want to be talked out of it."

I went to the kitchen to make coffee. In the kitchen I found a puddle on the floor. It was urine. Manny came into the kitchen. He stared at the puddle on the floor, and then at me, foolishly, with a little smile. He said, "I don't think I'm responsible for that."

My heart was cold. You don't ever really know a person, and maybe it's just those childhood games that make you think you do—you try to remember how he used to look, but all you know is how he looks when he drinks. It's not like a country song. It's not the good and then the bad, and how it gives you a reason to sing. It's that you don't know a person. He was a goddam drunk and I was a goddam drunk's wife and it was just piss on the floor.



"Dear Mom and Dad: Just a quick note to thank you for the very nice building."

• •

HE left that night for good, and good riddance is what I said to him. But he was in my head. Like a bad dream, but worse, because I was nothing but scared most of the time living with Manny. Still, after he left I didn't think about how scared he could make me. I'd just think about him—how he stole the stork that time, how he could make me laugh. And that's a bad dream, when you know good and well somebody's a drunk. I guess I never thought Manny would leave me for good. I'd watch for him sometimes, at night when I couldn't sleep. I'd go sit with the plastic pink stork that I kept in the living room, just like it was a live thing. Funny, huh? With all the lights off, me and this bird; maybe we were watching for a face in the window. Manny said that if a Navajo witch comes for you, you'll see a painted white face in the window; then he said I didn't have to worry, since I wasn't Navajo. Still, I'd watch that window and think how a Navajo skinwalker *could* witch a white. How things get in your head and you can't get them out. You can't sleep for thinking about something.

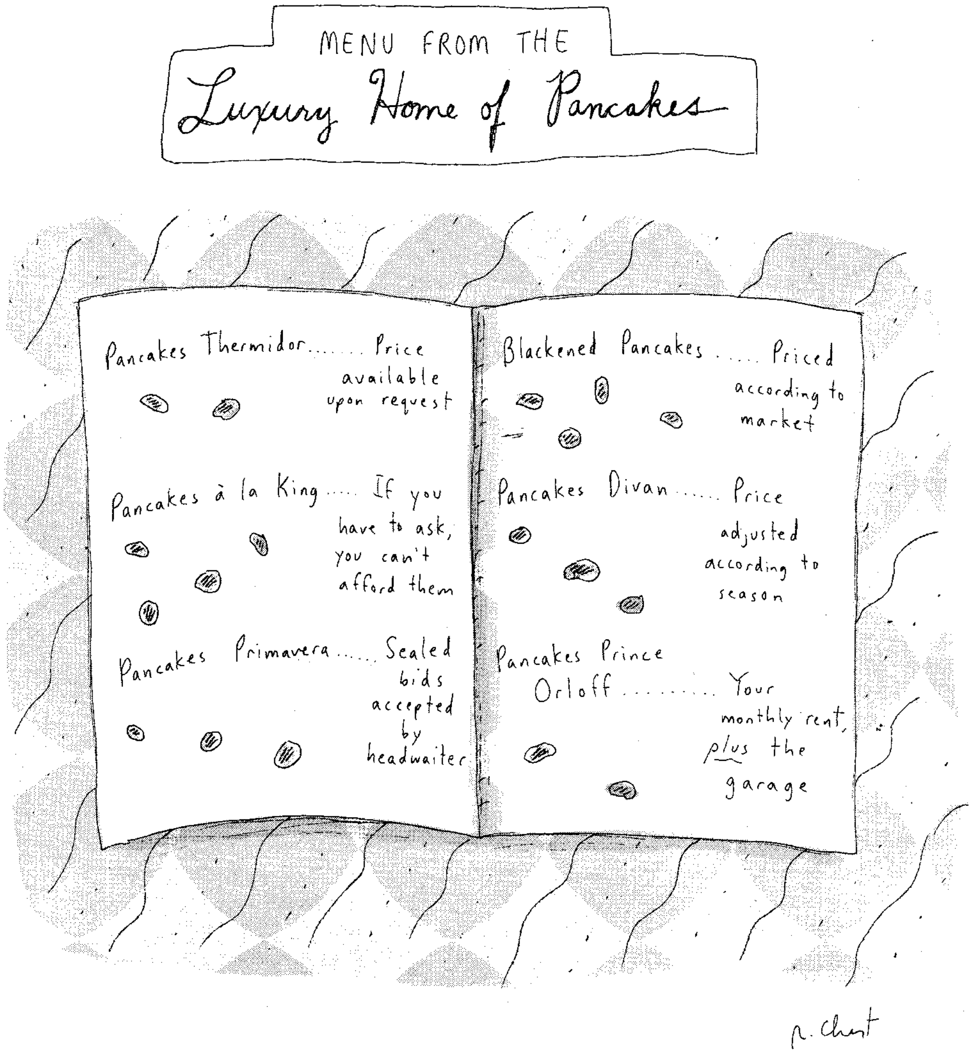
Then, a couple of days ago, they called me from a detoxification center eighty miles north of the reservation and said the police had picked up Manny. He had to detox for a few days, then he could go, but they wouldn't let him go on his own recognizance, because he was a danger to himself. I said to tell him I wasn't his wife anymore. Then I said never mind, I would do it myself.

There is a women's ward and a men's ward in the center. The walls of both are painted green. The whole place smells of vomit. In each ward there are rows of cots lined up against the walls, and in most beds lumps that are people sleeping, although some of the people are sitting in bed smoking and others are walking around. There is a young, black-haired woman who lies flat on her back and yells to the ceiling, "Put the music on!"

I hear Manny before I see him. When I turn the corner from the women's ward into the men's he's right there on the cot closest to me, next to the wall. His hair is long, he wears a red bandanna around his forehead, and his pajamas are paisley. He doesn't sound drunk. I can't see his face. He's sitting on his bed, talking to the man next to him. The man is asleep.

Manny is saying, "So they took me to this center for detoxification, and I told them I'm no ordinary drunk Indian. I'm Todacheene, man. Bitterwater. And that don't mean whiskey, neither. Manuelito was Bitterwater. So, first thing, they took my clothes, gave me pajamas with feet. Like kids wear—pajamas with feet, man. And the next thing, they processed me. That girl said, 'First thing, we had to sober you up, boss.' Chester, I was twenty-four hours dead drunk. That girl said I was being processed on the second day because I was dead drunk on the first. And she asked me, 'How old are you?' and I said, 'Old enough to know better.' What do you think of that, hey, Chester? And she asked me, 'When did you start to drink?' I told her, 'About two days ago.' I told her I am a social drinker, that I only drink socially. Chester, she's a slick chick. She said, 'Quit fooling around.' "

Manny leaned closer to Chester. "So I asked her, 'Who put feet in my pajamas?' She said, 'That's so you won't run away.' And I told her, 'Man, I can run with feet in my pajamas.' And she said, 'Yeah, but you'd look a little silly, don't you think?' What do you think of that, man?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R. Chast

"Hey, look here, Chester—it's my wife."

"I'm not your wife anymore, Manny."

Manny scoots back on the bed. He says, "That's O.K." He pats the mattress beside him. He says, "Have a sitdown."

From his bunk we can see the glassed-in nurses' station and two Navajo nurses watching us. There is also a white man. Manny says he drives the drunkmobile. Manny introduces me to Chester.

I say, "Manny, he's drunk. He's passed out and can't hear you."

Manny stares at his hands in his lap. He says quietly, "I know that." We both stare at his long fingers; the skin is peeling around the nails. "I'm just trying to make it interesting for him." The fingernails are white and look cold. His hands look very cold. He yells, so everybody in the room can hear, "I'm just trying to make things interesting for my bedmate here." The Navajo nurses squint at us.

I take Manny's left hand and put it between my hands, but they are too small, so I put it under my thigh to warm it.

Manny is staring at his feet. He says, "You know, these pajamas didn't always have feet. Somebody sewed them there. Who do you think is responsible for that?"

"I don't know."

He says, "If you were still my wife, I'd ask you to do something."

"What?"

"Cut the feet out of these pajamas."

"You'd just go get drunk again."

Manny leans his head back against the wall and closes his eyes. He says, "Maybe." He sticks his right hand under his own thigh to warm it. He says, "Maybe not." —ANN CUMMINS

•

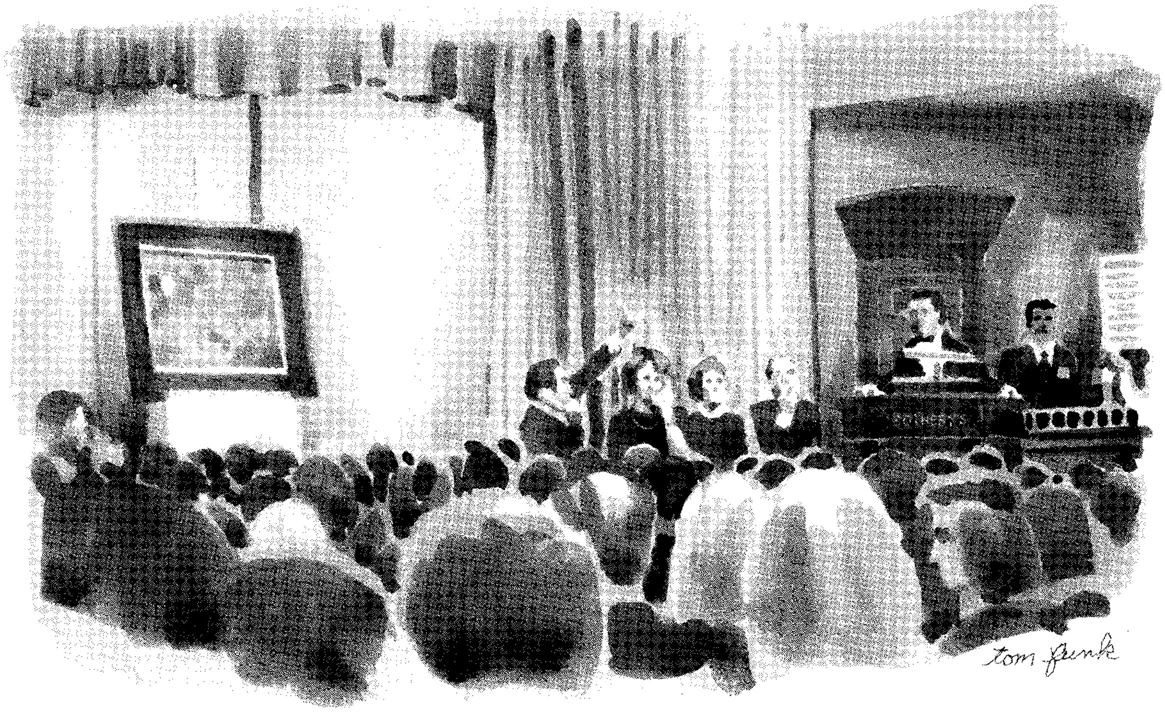
Were Washington and Mrs. Fairfax just good friends or something more? "We just don't know," said Kathleen Berkeley, an associate professor of history at UNCW.

We know now, however, that had Washington strayed, he wouldn't have been the first married president to do so.
—*Ben Steelman in the Wilmington (N.C.) Morning Star.*

Let's see, there was . . .

A REPORTER AT LARGE

IRISES



JOHN WHITNEY PAYSON, the owner of van Gogh's "Irises," had not seen the painting for some time. He was unprepared for the effect it would have on him when he confronted it again, at Sotheby's New York offices last fall, shortly before the start of the press conference that had been called to announce its forthcoming sale. Payson, a friendly, cheerful-looking man in his late forties, with reddish hair and a neatly trimmed fringe of beard, had been seven years old when his mother bought "Irises." It had not made much of an impression on him at the time, but over the years he had grown to like it more than any of the other paintings in his parents' collection—more than Goya's portrait of the young "Don Vicente Osorio," more than Renoir's lush "Confidences," more than "Te Poipoi," the great Tahitian Gauguin. His mother, Joan Whitney Payson, had willed "Irises" to him when she died, along with twenty-seven other paintings, and he had placed them on permanent loan to the Joan Whitney Payson Gallery of Art, the small museum he had built in her honor, at Westbrook College, in Portland, Maine.

For much of the last three years, "Irises" had been on loan to other museums—first to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Art Institute of Chicago for a show called "A Day in the Country, Impressionism and the French Landscape," and then to New York's Metropolitan Museum for the hugely popular exhibition "Van Gogh in Saint-Rémy and Auvers," where it had hung by itself on a wall of the entrance gallery. After that, the picture had gone into a locked vault. Seeing it again was such a strong emotional experience for Payson that he felt his eyes fill with tears. It wasn't that the thought of selling the picture upset him, he said later; it was just that "the painting is so powerful it takes your breath away." He excused himself from the room for a few minutes—luckily, the press conference had not started. When it did, Payson was able to explain quite calmly why he had decided to put his favorite painting up for auction.

"Irises" had simply become too expensive to keep, he said. Although his original intention had been that all the paintings on permanent loan to the gallery at Westbrook College would eventually become gifts to the college, "the recent and unprecedented spiral in art prices," as he put it, together with changes in the tax law on donated art works, had forced him to reëvaluate his plans. During the last year, one of van Gogh's "Sunflowers" paintings had sold for just under forty million dollars at Christie's in London—more than triple the previous record for a painting at auction. A few months later, another van Gogh, "The Bridge at Trinquetaille," had brought twenty million two hundred thousand dollars, also at Christie's London salesroom. These two sales had driven the cost of insurance on "Irises" to such an astronomical level that Payson could no longer afford to let Westbrook lend it to other institutions, a condition that he had always felt was essential. The new tax law, on the other hand, would vastly diminish the tax deduction that he could take if he gave "Irises" to Westbrook outright. He had decided, therefore, after consultation with the board of directors at Westbrook, to sell the picture and divide the proceeds into three parts: one part would be donated to the general endowment of Westbrook College; another would establish a foundation to aid various Maine institutions, including the Joan Whitney Payson Gallery of Art; and the third part would go into a family trust.

Although Payson did not mention it at the press conference, he conceded in subsequent interviews that there was another factor in his decision. A lawsuit brought by Payson and his three sisters against Virginia Kraft Payson, whom their father, Charles Shipman Payson, married in 1977, two years after Joan Payson's death, had recently been decided in the defendant's favor. The plaintiffs had charged her with undue influence on their father, who had altered his will sixteen times during their seven-year marriage. When their father died, in 1985, it was found that his entire estate, of seventy million dollars, and most of his property had gone to his second wife, who was much younger than he. If the outcome of that lawsuit had been different, John Payson said, it might not have been necessary to sell "Irises." Some people questioned why it was necessary in any case. Couldn't he have just left the picture at Westbrook, with the understanding that it would never travel? Edgar Allen Beem, the art critic of the Maine *Times*, said in an article that Payson's decision, which would deprive Maine citizens of "one of the few works of genius in our midst," was motivated by "nothing but greed." Neither the college nor the gallery raised a protest, however, and most of the news stories focussed on the prospects for a new record price at auction. John Marion, the chairman of Sotheby's and the firm's chief auctioneer, was quoted widely as saying that "Irises" was "the most important work we have auctioned in my memory." David Nash, the company's leading expert on Impressionist and modern art, said it was "the finest painting Sotheby's has sold since I started here twenty-five years ago," and he estimated that it would bring "somewhere between twenty million and thirty-nine million." Numbers like that affect the way we look at works of art. "Irises" was rapidly turning into an icon, venerated but increasingly difficult to see.

FOUNTAIN PARK

At a hundred feet or more the maples
and the oaks are another architecture
building on this life the gold leaf of the next,
scattered in sequence, linked like windbreak.
No matter how miraculous the stiff
flight of the fish or the balance of gifted
children on their toes, no matter that the god
has drawn his sword against his nakedness
and the lily is a girl closed against the cold,
I can't remember when the fountains worked,
spread like all the other cemetery
sculpture into a city in a valley,
here and there the graveyard grass like pasture.

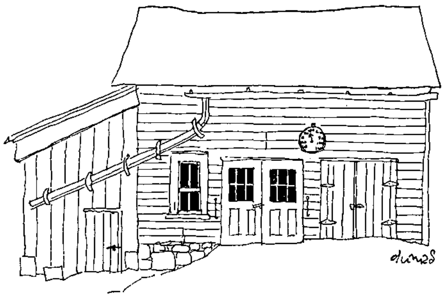
From the top of the hill it's Saturday,
empty, early in the evening, in season,
the sun in detail now, a kind of tone,
a kind of candlepower the wind could easily
blow out, the way it kindles the dry leaves
in the bowls of the fountains—pillars of
fire, water from a stone. In the bridgework
of the leaves I'm holding, the nine-lobed oak,
the compound willow feather, all kinds of things
pass witness and are true about this last
light of the day coming onto winter,
the trees almost transparent in their dark,
the high grass green as lawns in the hereafter.

—Stanley Plumly

• •

VINCENT VAN GOGH painted "Irises" during his first week in the mental asylum at Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, in the spring of 1889. His work had undergone a radical transformation over the preceding fourteen months. Living in Arles, seventeen miles south of Saint-Rémy, and going out every morning into the Provençal countryside, where he sometimes finished three canvases in a single day, he had come to see nature with a new eye. Instead of trying to reproduce exactly what he saw, the way Monet and Pissarro did, van Gogh had started, as he wrote to his brother Theo, "to exaggerate the essential, and, with set purpose, to leave the obvious vague." He used stronger colors than he had used before, and he used them more arbitrarily, seeking through odd combinations and violent contrasts to release the emotions that his subjects held for him. "Nature here is so *extraordinarily* beautiful!" he wrote to Theo. "Everywhere and over all the vault of the sky is a marvellous blue, and the sun sheds a radiance of pure sulphur. . . . It absorbs me so much that I let myself go without thinking of any rules."

Van Gogh's brushwork became looser and more visible, animating the planes of color with contrasting textures and with undulating lines that seemed to echo the movement of living forms. Having started to paint only eight years earlier, when he was twenty-seven, he now found the courage to follow his own path as an artist. But the strain on his unstable mental and physical capacities was tremendous. Paul Gauguin's arrival in Arles the previous fall, which van Gogh had looked forward to with such intensity, precipitated the most famous catastrophe in modern art—hallucinations, the mutilated ear, Gauguin's flight. A month later, van Gogh's second seizure led to his being held in the local hospital by police order, his neighbors having lodged an official protest against him as a dangerous lunatic. Calm once more, shattered in spirit but not without hope, the artist discussed his situation with Frédéric Salles, the Protestant pastor who had become his friend. Salles reported to Theo, "He is fully aware of his condition and speaks to me with touching candor and simplicity about what has happened and what, he fears, may happen again. 'I am unable,' he told me yesterday, 'to look after myself and control myself; I feel that I am quite different from what I used to be.' " The pastor suggested the private asylum of Saint-Paul-de-Mausole, at Saint-Rémy. Theo, who had been supporting his brother on his modest earnings as an art dealer in Paris, agreed to pay the asylum's charges, and van Gogh seemed content with this temporary solution to his problems—he thought it might take him



a year to recover fully. He was given a private room and, since the asylum was far from fully occupied, another room to use as a studio.

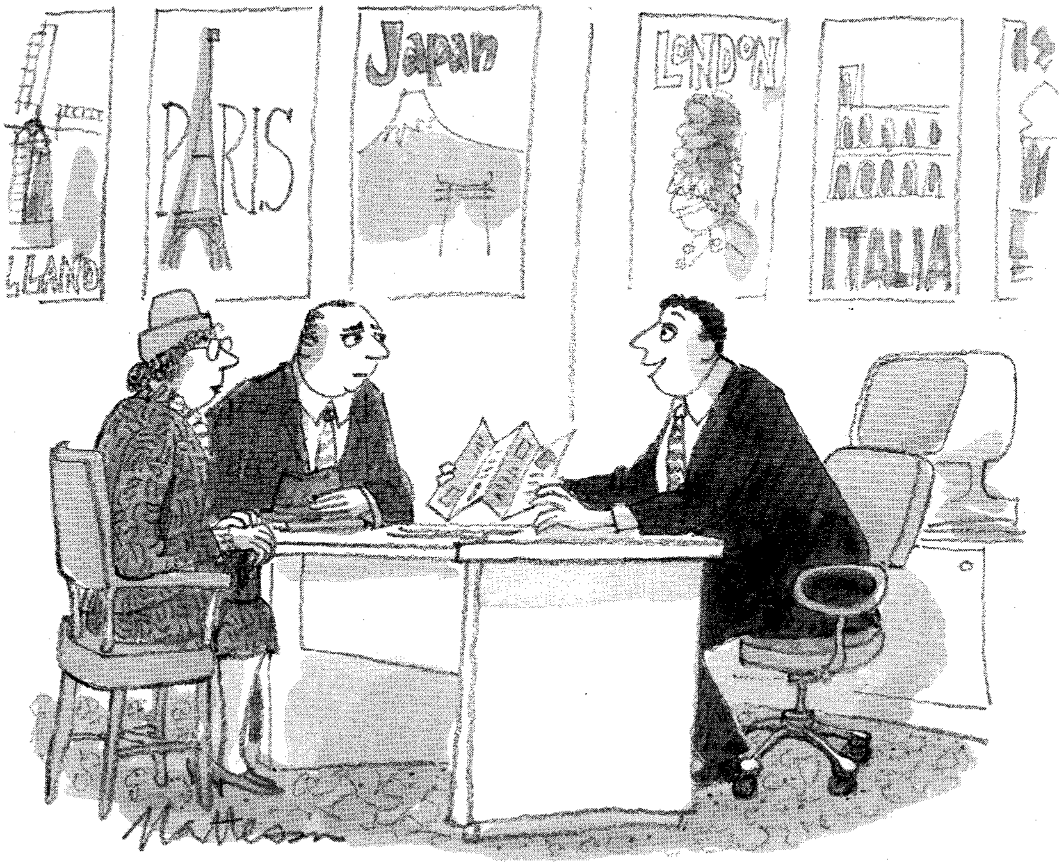
A week later, he wrote to Theo's wife, Johanna, "The fear and horror of madness that I used to have has already lessened a good deal. And although here you continually hear terrible cries and howls like beasts in a menagerie, in spite of that people get to know each other very well and help each other when their attacks come on." He had already started painting again. His first subjects were the flowers in the asylum's untended garden—"some violet irises and a lilac bush," he wrote his brother. The lilac-bush painting is now in the Hermitage Museum, in Leningrad. The finished "Irises," which he described to Theo as an "étude" rather than a "tableau," is unique in van Gogh's œuvre. The frieze-like composition, in which the purple flowers and their pale-green sword-shaped leaves are seen in extreme closeup, is neither a landscape nor a still-life but something in between. One white iris stops the eye at the far left, and intensifies the jewel-like richness of the purples and greens. The bold, slashing lines were undoubtedly influenced by the Japanese prints that he had admired so much in Paris—quite possibly by Hokusai's "Irises," from a woodblock series done in the late eighteen-twenties. Van Gogh treated the subject quite realistically, without arbitrary color or agitated brushwork. The style is calm, assured, and exquisitely controlled.

• •

"Irises" was among the eleven canvases that van Gogh shipped to Theo in Paris that July. Although Vincent called it a "study," meaning that it had been taken directly from nature, without imaginative restructuring, Theo liked the picture so much that he selected it, together with "The Starry Night," for submission to the Salon des Indépendants exhibition in September. "The Starry Night" was hung badly, but "the other one makes an extremely good showing," Theo wrote. "They have put it on the narrow wall of the room, and it strikes the eye from afar. It is a beautiful study full of air and life." Félix Fénéon, the most alert art critic of the time in Paris, noticed "Irises" at the Salon and made a favorable comment on it in *La Vogue*. Several artists saw it and were deeply impressed, according to Theo. There were no buyers, but Theo was hopeful nonetheless. "I think we can wait patiently for success to come," he wrote reassuringly a few months later. "You'll surely live to see it . . . and it will come of its own accord by reason of your beautiful pictures."

DAVID NASH, of Sotheby's, visited the asylum of Saint-Paul-de-Mausole in June of 1987 and took photographs of the direct descendants of van Gogh's purple irises. The "Irises" sale was in the wind then, but John Payson had not made a final decision about it. Nash and his wife, Lucy Mitchell-Innes, who runs the contemporary-art department of Sotheby's in New York, were driving through the South of France on vacation, and they thought it would be fun to see the garden where van Gogh had painted. The asylum was still being run as a private mental hospital, they found, but the patients were housed in new buildings; the old wing where van Gogh had stayed was empty. The only sign of van Gogh's having been there was a small bronze portrait bust of him in the garden, by Ossip Zadkine.

Nash is one of the key people at Sotheby's in New York. In addition to being in charge of Impressionist and modern art (for auction purposes, "modern art" covers painting and sculpture from Post-Impressionism to about 1945), he is a senior vice-president and a member of the firm's board of directors. A trim, canny-looking Englishman who has spent the last twenty-five years of his career in New York (he is now forty-five), Nash got into the auction business somewhat inadvertently, as many people do. His father had been an antique-silver dealer in London before the Second World War. After the war, he became



"How about Nebraska? The dollar's still strong in Nebraska."

• •

the silver-and-jewelry expert at Harrods, but this line of work held little interest for his son. After a traditional English public-school education (Ashdown House, in Sussex; Marlborough College, in Wiltshire), young Nash decided to forgo Oxford or Cambridge. He did spend a year at the University of Neuchâtel, in Switzerland, "learning French adequately, German hardly at all, and how to smoke Gauloise cigarettes quite well," but then, instead of choosing a sensible career such as law or banking, he spent the next year and a half working intermittently at odd jobs and travelling around Europe the rest of the time. "One day, my father suggested that I consider a career at Sotheby's," Nash said not long ago. "This idea rather appealed to me, because I found out that auctions were usually held at 11 A.M., which sounded like a good time to start work. It came as a great shock when I found out you had to start at eight in the morning and you didn't get off until six."

Through Graham Llewellyn, who had once worked for Nash's father at Harrods and had gone on to take over the jewelry department of Sotheby's, it was arranged for Nash to be interviewed by Peter Wilson, the firm's mercurial senior partner. "Peter asked me what I was interested in," Nash recalls. "I just happened to have seen an exhibition of paintings by Monet, so I said, 'Impressionist painting.' He asked me what my training was, and I told him I'd worked in a lunatic asylum in Surrey and been an assistant gravedigger at Wimbledon Cemetery, and, in characteristic fashion, Peter giggled and said that sounded like the best possible training for Sotheby's. Of course, I knew nothing about him then. Although he seemed very easygoing and fun, he was also quite intimidating. His size, for one thing. And his polished manner. And the impression he gave you that you were only just holding his attention—that there was something else, much more important, lurking about his mind. Anyway, my interview was very brief. The department of Impressionist and modern art had only recently been set up there—it was being run by someone I'd been to school with, Bruce Chatwin, under the supervision of Wilson and a man named John Rickett—but there were no openings. The job of porter, which was all I was qualified for, had been filled by another young man. I was told, 'Sorry, if something comes up we'll let you know.' A few weeks later, they called and said something had come up. The porter had been fired. He'd made a number of mistakes, which included leaving the back door to Sotheby's open two weekends in a row, but his worst mistake had been shipping the wrong picture to Helsinki. Peter Wilson brought an important client back to the storeroom to look at a Matisse. 'The Matisse, sir?' the young porter said. 'Yes, yes, the Matisse.' 'But I've sent it to Helsinki, sir!' Peter stormed out of the room—he was never one for direct confrontations—and shortly afterward he was heard to say, 'Find that boy, find him wherever he is, and fire him.' Which they did. And so I got his job. About a week later, someone reminded Peter that 'that boy' came from a very wealthy family in East Anglia, and that his parents had a famous collection of old silver. 'Well, find the boy and hire him back again,' Peter said. I believe he was given a job in the arms-and-armor department."

AT the close of the 1889 Salon des Indépendants exhibition in Paris, "Irises" and "The Starry Night" were taken down and stored in an attic room that Theo van Gogh had rented in a building near his Montmartre apartment. Theo and Johanna were expecting their first child. They were moving to a new apartment, where there would not be room to hang Vincent's paintings—their old apartment had served for some time as an unofficial exhibition space for his work. On the ground floor of the building where Theo had rented storage space, however, was the shop of Père Tanguy, who could be counted on to put van Gogh's paintings in his window and to show the others to

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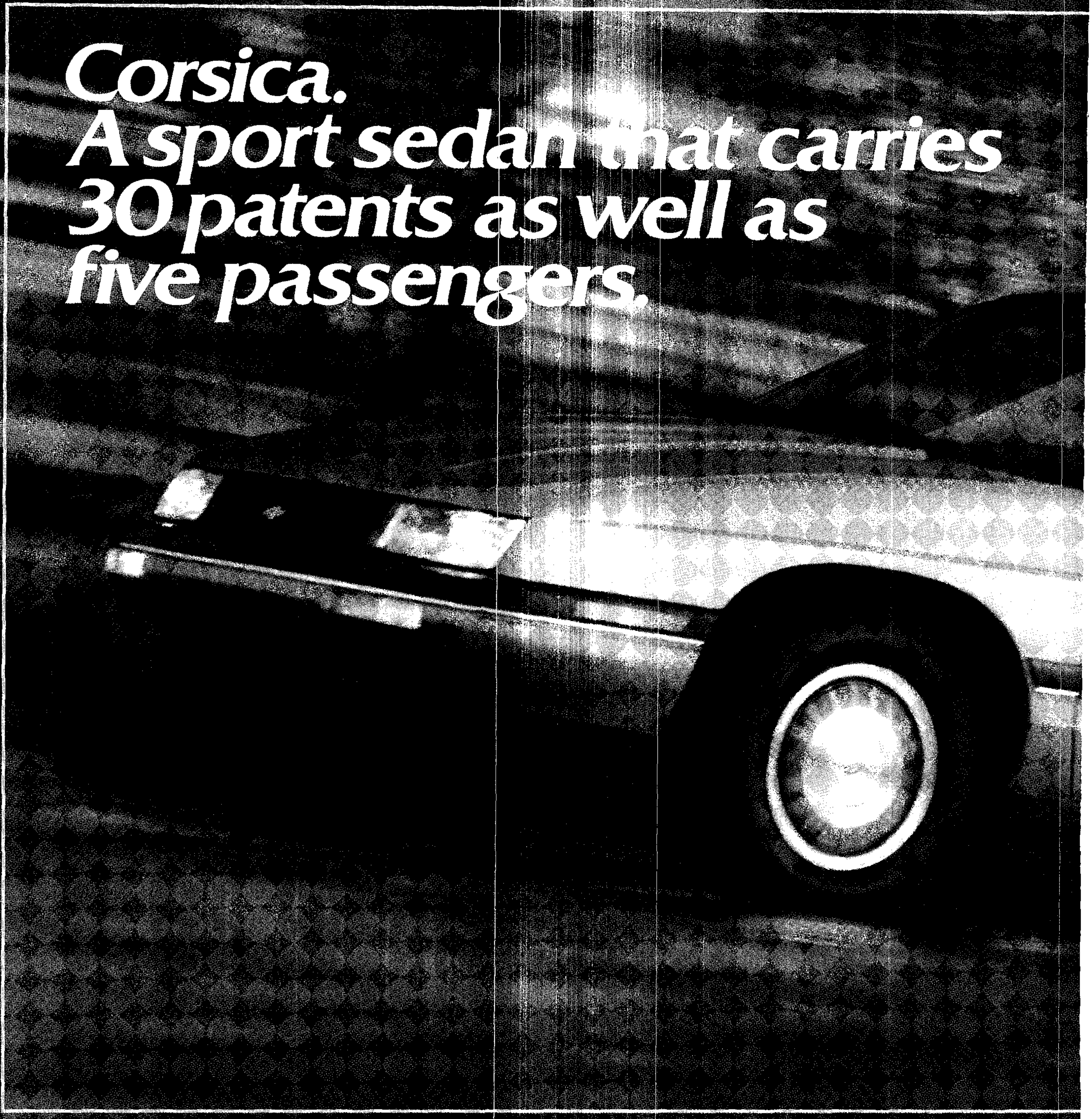

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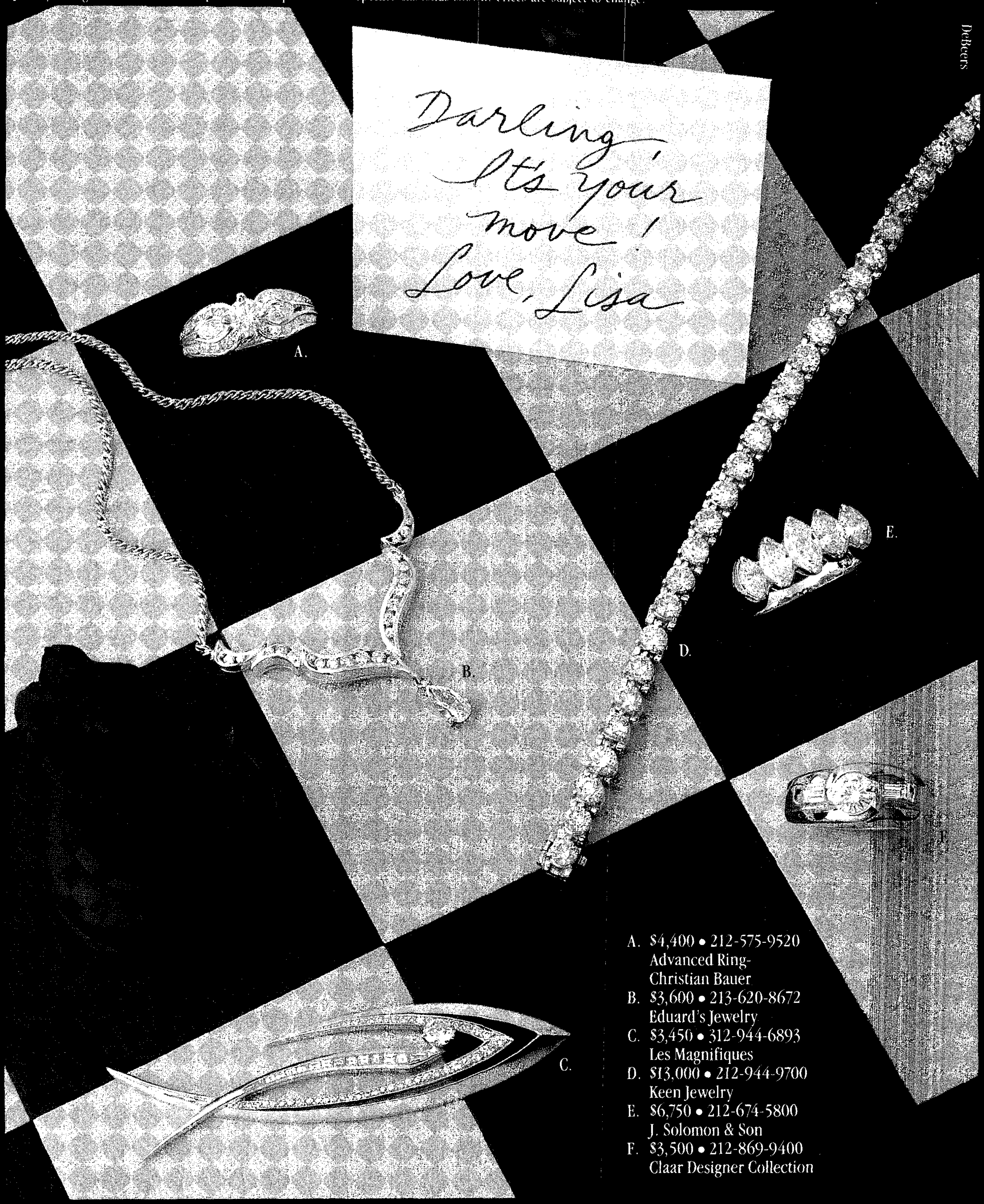

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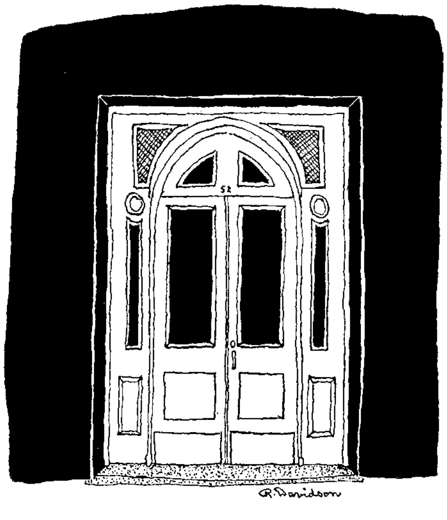
anyone who expressed the slightest interest in seeing them.

Julien-François Tanguy was one of the authentic saints of modern art. A stocky man who was in his sixties at the time, he had been a plasterer and a *charcutier* before finding his true métier, in 1865, as a maker and seller of paints for artists—"*couleurs fines pour artistes peintres.*" For years, he had been peddling his colors in the places outside Paris where certain artists congregated, such as Barbizon and Argenteuil, and in the process he had met Pissarro, Monet, Renoir, and Cézanne. He became an ardent champion of the Impressionist revolution at a time when these artists were universally ignored or reviled, and the Impressionists liked him so much that they continued to buy paints from him for years afterward, even though his colors were not always as good as they might have been. Tanguy was a revolutionary by nature. He had joined the Paris Commune after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, and had fought against the troops of the reactionary government at Versailles. After the Commune was defeated, in 1871, he was arrested and deported to Brest. He languished there for two years. Pardoned in 1873, he returned to Paris and set up shop at 14 Rue Clauzel, and there he welcomed most of his old clients and several new ones. In addition to grinding colors and framing canvases, Tanguy began to act as an art dealer, trying hard—though for the most part unsuccessfully—to sell paintings by the Post-Impressionist artists, whom no established dealer would represent. Theo van Gogh, the director of a small Montmartre gallery that belonged to the well-known firm of Boussod & Valadon, was never able to interest his employers or their clients in the new painting. Although Monet, Renoir, and Pissarro were starting to make their way by this time, there was no market for Gauguin, Seurat, Cézanne, or van Gogh. Cézanne had not shown his work in Paris since 1877. Tanguy's shop was virtually the only place in Paris where paintings by the reclusive Aix master could be seen (Cézanne had made Tanguy his exclusive agent), and as a result the shop became a mecca and a meeting place for a whole generation of young artists, who came mainly to look at the Cézannes but also saw there paintings left on consignment by Seurat, Toulouse-Lautrec, Louis Anquetin, Maurice Denis, Paul Sérusier, and Édouard Vuillard.

Van Gogh met Tanguy in 1886, soon after he joined his brother in Paris. Theo's apartment on the Rue Lepic, where van Gogh lived for the next year and a half, was close to Tanguy's shop on the Rue Clauzel, and before long Vincent was spending a great deal of his time at Tanguy's. The old man's boundless enthusiasm for van Gogh's work and for advanced art, his unfailing generosity (he was always inviting penniless artists in for a meal, and he never pressed them to pay for paints or supplies), his love for the poor ("Any man who spends more than fifty centimes a day is a scoundrel," he often said), and his socialist ideals, which he had risked his life to defend in the days of the Commune—all this appealed immensely to van Gogh, who had devoted years of his own life to working among poor people. Although Tanguy's wife and van Gogh detested each other, Tanguy seemed to love the artist like a son. Tanguy treasured the portrait that van Gogh painted of him in 1887. It shows him seated, hands joined in his lap, facing us directly and wearing a wide-brimmed straw hat. The kind blue eyes, the grizzled beard, and the solid, upright character of the man are in odd contrast to the background—a wall completely covered with Japanese prints. After Tanguy died, his daughter sold this painting to Rodin, and it hangs today in the Musée Rodin, in Paris. Van Gogh painted two other portraits of Tanguy. He also did one of Mme. Tanguy, which she apparently disliked; at any rate, she got rid of it, and its whereabouts is unknown.

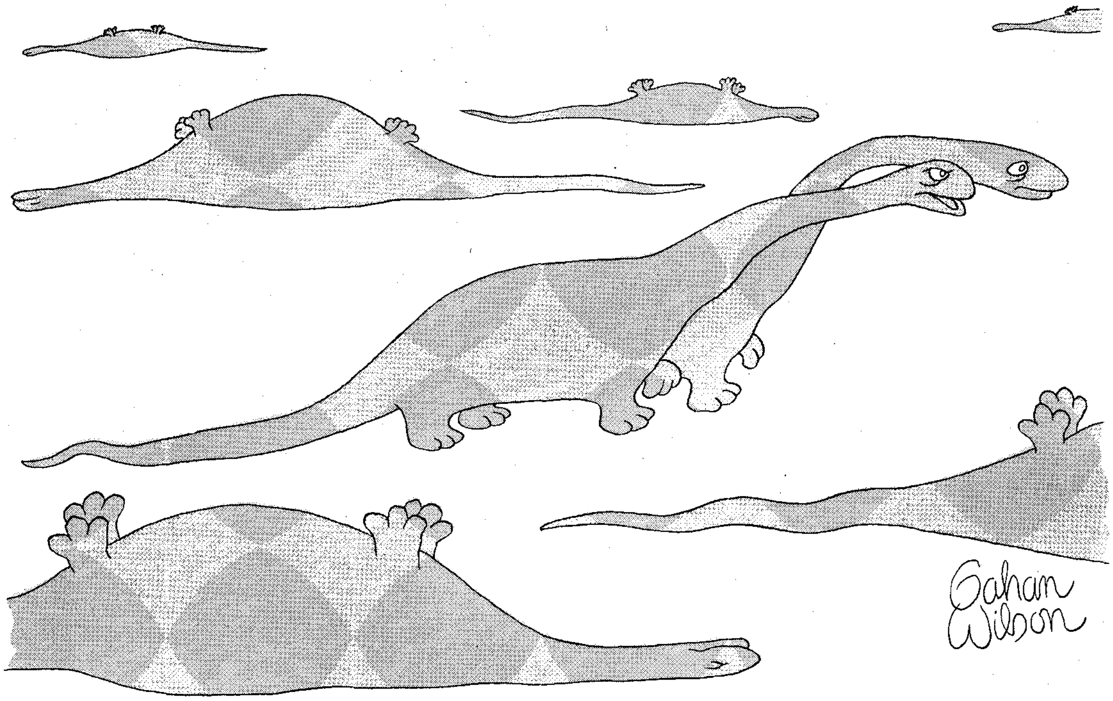
After van Gogh left Paris for the South of France, in February of 1888, Tanguy continued to supply him with paint and canvas, and to frame his new pictures and display them in his shop. The two men saw each other again in the spring of 1890. Van Gogh was passing through Paris on his way from Saint-Rémy to Auvers-sur-Oise, a village twenty-two miles north of the capital, where his brother had arranged for him to live under the sympathetic eye of Dr. Paul-Ferdinand Gachet, an amateur painter who knew Monet and Cézanne. Tanguy was troubled by van Gogh's sad and distant manner on this visit. During the year he had spent in the asylum at Saint-Rémy, he had undergone a series of epileptic seizures, followed by periods of deep depression. Although the doctor there had discharged him with the notation "Cured," this was clearly wishful thinking.



Two months later, Tanguy travelled to Auvers to attend van Gogh's funeral. The artist had gone out into the Auvers countryside on a Sunday afternoon, set his easel against a haystack, and shot himself in the side with a revolver. The bullet missed his heart. He dragged himself back to the inn where he had been living and, without a word to anyone, went upstairs to his attic room. His condition was discovered some time later. He lingered in great pain for two days. When he died, the body was carried downstairs and laid out in what was called "the artists' room." (Auvers was something of an artists' colony, and artists often stayed at the inn.) Theo, who had rushed to Auvers as soon as he heard the terrible news, had hung a number of his brother's paintings on the walls of this room. Many years later, Adeline Ravoux Carrié, the innkeeper's daughter (van Gogh had painted her portrait when she was thirteen), remembered that one of those paintings was "Irises."

In Paul Gauguin's 1903 manuscript called "Avant et Après" he tells a sentimental story about van Gogh. Destitute and starving, van Gogh sells a still-life of pink shrimps to a junk dealer for five francs, but instead of buying food he gives the money to a woman beggar. Gauguin then imagines this scene:

> A day will come, and I see it as if it had already come. I enter Room No. 9 of the auction house: the auctioneer is selling a collection of paintings.
>
> "Four hundred francs, 'The Pink



"Frankly, I don't like the way things are going."

Shrimps' . . . Four hundred fifty . . . Five hundred . . . Come, gentlemen, it's worth more than that. . . . No one says a word? . . . Sold, 'The Pink Shrimps,' by Vincent van Gogh."

• •

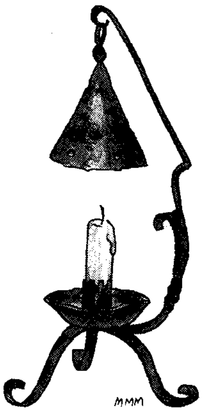
DAVID NASH was nineteen when he started work at Sotheby's, in 1961. The firm liked (and still likes) to hire young people who have not been to college, so that they can learn about works of art by handling them rather than by looking at slides. Michel Strauss, who was hired the same day Nash was, and is now Nash's opposite number—head of Sotheby's department of Impressionist and modern art in London—had received a fairly thorough education in art history, first at Harvard and then at the Courtauld Institute, in London, but Peter Wilson didn't think any of that was going to be very useful to him; Wilson was more impressed by the fact that Jules Strauss, Michel's grandfather, had owned a notable collection of Impressionist pictures. For an auctioneer, what mattered was hands-on experience—looking and remembering. Nash became extremely interested in the business right away. "I discovered I had a very good memory for pictures," he says. "Either you have it or you don't; it's something like musical talent in that sense. I saw pictures in every sort of condition, and I had to remember where they had been stored, or what they had been sold for and who bought them. Also, I found I could spot fakes very well, which is something you can't learn from a book." He worked as a porter for a year and a half, moving pictures around, shipping them, going to people's houses to fetch them, placing them on the display stand during auctions, and removing them when they were "knocked down." After that, he spent six months as Peter Wilson's special assistant. The position was supposed to give him valuable experience in dealing with clients, but it didn't work out that way, because Wilson was always too busy to explain things, and when he dealt with clients he usually made Nash stand outside in the hall. Sotheby's was still a small firm then, with fewer than two hundred employees, and under Wilson things were fairly chaotic. Wilson, however, was already emerging as the architect of the international postwar art market, in which the two major auction houses, Sotheby's and Christie's, would assume an increasingly dominant position.

Throughout the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth, auction prices remained relatively stable, and well below dealer prices. The paintings for which American millionaires of the Morgan era paid such vast sums came through Duveen, Wildenstein, and other powerful dealers of the period; no collector would have dreamed of selling a really important picture at auction. There was a social stigma attached to the auction process, which relied mainly on death, divorce, and bankruptcy for its continuance. Christie's, founded in 1766, and, to a lesser degree, Sotheby's, founded in 1744 as a rare-book auction house, did handle major works of art in auctioning off the estates of deceased collectors, but in England the important works were more often passed down from one generation to the next, or else were sold off privately. Christie's and Sotheby's had always done most of their business in low-priced lots of less than a thousand dollars each, and this did not really start to change until the nineteen-fifties, when, for a variety of reasons, the desire to own Impressionist and Post-Impressionist pictures took violent hold of a number of Greek shipowners and other extremely wealthy individuals. The phenomenon first manifested itself at the Gabriel Cognacq sale in Paris in 1952, when Mme. Jean Walter, an art dealer's widow whose new husband was very rich, paid ninety-four thousand dollars for a Cézanne still-life entitled "Pommes et Biscuits." Much higher prices were soon registered at subsequent sales in Paris, in London, and at Parke-Bernet in New York. The November, 1957, sale at Parke-Bernet of the Parisian-born banker Georges Lurcy's estate inspired Henry Ford II to pay two hundred thousand dollars for a Renoir, and Basil Goulandris to spend a hundred and eighty thousand for Gauguin's "Mau Taporo." Goulandris boasted afterward to Maurice Rheims, the chief auctioneer of the Hôtel Drouot, in Paris, "Having that picture knocked down to me has made my name known everywhere. . . . In terms of advertising, the articles the press has published about me are worth easily double the sum I spent that afternoon . . . In my whole life till then, I'd never dared to buy a work of art."

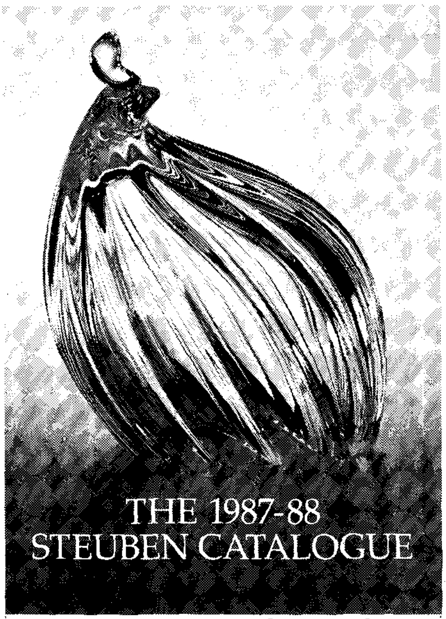
Peter Wilson had joined Sotheby's in 1936, when it was still a comfortable, antediluvian firm devoted primarily to the selling of rare books and libraries. He had seen it transform itself into a more modern and comprehensive operation, with specialized departments capable of dispensing expert knowledge in all major fields of art, but when he took over as the senior partner, or executive head of the business, in 1957, Sotheby's was still being run almost as a public service: a great deal of money changed hands at Sotheby's auctions, but not much stayed in the firm. Physically impressive—he was six feet four and portly—Wilson had a magnetic presence, which most people found irresistible. In business and in his personal life he was impulsive, manipulative, aggressive, and willing to take risks. Wilson saw very clearly that the key to success in the new, rapidly expanding art market lay in getting good Impressionist and Post-Impressionist pictures to sell. He proved this almost immediately at the famous Goldschmidt sale, which took place at Sotheby's London salesroom in October of 1958.

Jakob Goldschmidt, a German banker who fled Hitler, settled in New York City, and died there, in 1955, had collected both Old Masters and French Impressionists. His son, Erwin, who was a New York insurance broker, was obligated under his father's will to sell the pictures and share the proceeds with his own two sons, and after lengthy discussions with Peter Wilson he decided to consign most of them to Sotheby's. The older pictures and some minor Impressionists were sold, quite successfully, at a Sotheby's auction in 1956. Pleased by the results, Erwin Goldschmidt then allowed Wilson and his colleagues to see seven Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings that he had held back from the sale: two Cézannes, including the magnificent "Garçon au Gilet Rouge;" van Gogh's "Jardin Public à Arles;" Renoir's "La Pensée;" and three Manets—a portrait, a self-portrait, and a gloriously festive Paris street scene, "La Rue Mosnier aux Drapeaux." In the extremely complex negotiations that followed, Wilson agreed to the novel and risky idea of a flexible commission. Instead of the standard ten per cent (or higher) that London auction houses generally charged the seller, Wilson agreed that Sotheby's would charge only a tiny commission on proceeds up to the very high reserve price that Goldschmidt had insisted on for each picture. (If a lot at auction does not meet the secret reserve price that its owner has set for it—the price below which he does not want it to be sold—it is "bought in" and returned to the owner.) Sotheby's commission would apply to anything above the reserve, and it would increase proportionately as the reserve was exceeded. Pictures of this quality had rarely been sold at auction, however, and nobody knew what would happen. A few months before the sale, an unidentified Greek shipowner offered Goldschmidt six hundred thousand pounds (a million six hundred and eighty thousand dollars) for the collection; Wilson argued, persuasively, that the offer only proved that the pictures would bring more than that at auction. But up to the last minute Goldschmidt kept threatening to cancel the contract and withdraw from the sale.

Taking his cue from the Lurcy sale at Parke-Bernet, Wilson scheduled the Goldschmidt sale for 9:30 P.M.—it was Sotheby's first evening auction—and specified that evening dress be worn. Enormous publicity, orchestrated by Wilson, led up to and accompanied the event; the packed salesroom appeared to contain as many celebrities as art dealers. The auction itself took only twenty-one minutes. When it was over, the art market and the auction business had been irrevocably transformed. Every picture exceeded its reserve price by a sizable margin, and the total sales figure—£781,000, or $2,186,800, for a mere seven lots—broke all auction records. When the New York dealer Georges Keller, buying for Paul Mellon, went up to £220,000 ($616,000) for Lot 6, the "Garçon au Gilet Rouge," a hush settled over the room. The bid was more than twice as much as anyone had ever bid for a picture at auction before. Peter Wilson, toweringly urbanely on the rostrum, permitted an expression of reproach to cross his plump pink face. "Two hundred and twenty thousand pounds?" he inquired. "Two hundred and twenty thousand pounds? What, will no one offer any more?" A roar of laughter shook the room, and the sale ended on a merry note.



By today's standards, the Goldschmidt prices seem quaint. Only two of Goldschmidt's pictures have come back on the market since 1958;



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• •

van Gogh's "Jardin Public à Arles" went for more than five million dollars at Christie's in 1980, and the Manet portrait for three million six hundred thousand at Christie's in 1983. Sotheby's and Peter Wilson had proved, however, that very important paintings could indeed bring record prices at auction, and the market has since reacted accordingly. Sotheby's and Christie's, reaching out more and more aggressively for choice works to sell, have become the colossi of the international art trade. Their rapid growth has alarmed art dealers, and forced some of them out of business. New York dealers argue that the practice of setting secret reserves is unethical, and perverts the whole idea of an open public sale. They charge the auction houses with conflict of interest, in that they claim to cater to buyers as well as to sellers while collecting a fee from both. The auctioneer has usurped all the natural functions of the dealer, they say, without assuming the dealer's commitment to and responsibility for the work he sells. (This is no longer true; auction houses now are legally bound to guarantee the authenticity of their wares.) So far, though, the dealers have been unable to impose any significant restrictions on their powerful rivals. Many dealers continue to function and prosper in the current market, needless to say. There are still collectors who prefer to buy from a dealer; they value the privacy of the transaction, and also the dealer's depth of knowledge in his field. Dozens of smaller auction houses do business as well—some quite successfully—but Christie's and Sotheby's control, between them, from a quarter to a third of all painting sales in the world today, and in the absence of those two houses the dizzying upward spiral of prices would be unthinkable.

OCTAVE MIRBEAU (1848-1917), novelist, art critic, drama critic, polemical journalist, a master of invective but also an ardent proselytizer for unpopular causes, was one of the first important writers in France to champion the Impressionists. Mirbeau knew everybody: Zola, Mallarmé, Monet, Rodin—all the significant writers, artists, and politicians of his day. He did not know Gauguin in 1891, but, because Mallarmé had asked him to write an article about Gauguin's paintings, several of which were being sold to finance the artist's first trip to Tahiti, Mirbeau wrote not one but two articles (the first appeared in *Le Figaro*, the second in *L'Écho de Paris*), and their evocation of "this restless nature, tormented by the infinite" gave birth to the popular legend of Gauguin's tropical pilgrimage.

That year, in *L'Écho de Paris*, Mirbeau published a long article entitled "Vincent van Gogh." He had never met van Gogh, either, but he used the February, 1891, exhibition of the Salon des Indépendants, whose organizers had been persuaded to hang ten of van Gogh's last works as a memorial to the artist, to deliver what was in effect an impassioned eulogy. Mirbeau told the story of van Gogh's life, somewhat romanticized and not always accurate in its details, and went on to say, "Everything under the brush of this strange and powerful creator is animated by a strange life, independent of that of the things he paints, a life that is in him and that *is* him. He expends himself totally, on behalf of the trees, skies, flowers, and fields that he swells to capacity with the astonishing sap of his being. These forms multiply, run wild, writhe, extending even to the formidable madness of his skies, where drunken celestial bodies spin and waver, where stars stretch into disorderly rows of comets. Yet, even in the upheaval of these fantastic flowers that rear up and tuft their feathers like demented birds, van Gogh always maintains his wonderful qualities as a painter and a nobility that is moving, as well as a tragic grandeur that is terrifying." Mirbeau's essay marked the beginning of van Gogh's ascent in the public imagination to his current high-water mark as the most widely appreciated (and most expensive) artist of the twentieth century.

Poor Theo, the devoted brother, did not live to see this apotheosis. Two months after Vincent's death, Theo suffered a complete mental breakdown, from which he never recovered; he died in January of 1891. His wife and baby son moved back to Holland, taking with them many but by no means all of Vincent's unsold canvases. Tanguy still had nearly a hundred of them in his shop or in the attic room, and now and then he actually managed to sell one, for a derisory sum. At some point in 1892, he sold two van

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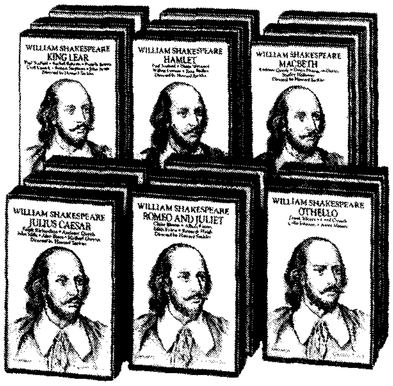
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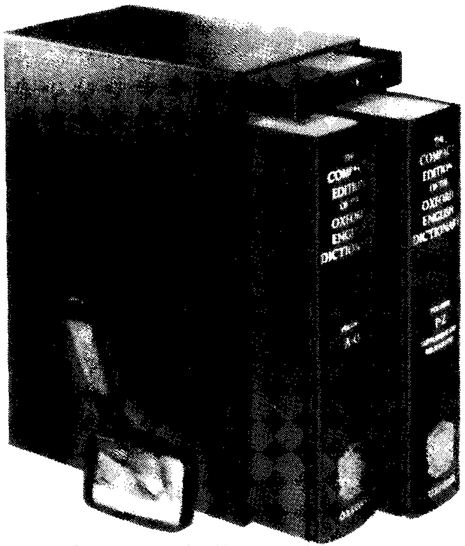

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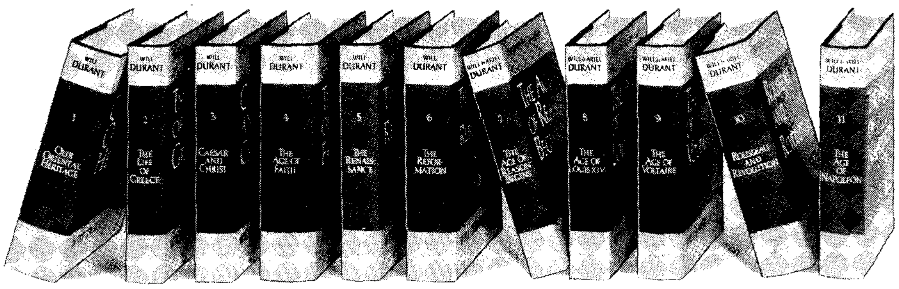
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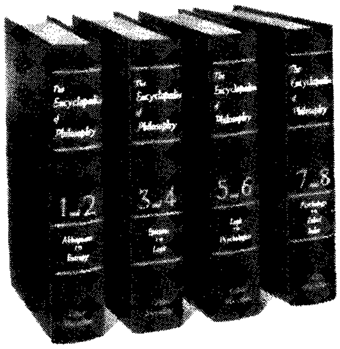
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Goghs to Octave Mirbeau—the second "Portrait of Tanguy" (bareheaded this time) and "Irises."

Like many French art critics and writers, then and since, Mirbeau bought or was given pictures by the artists he wrote about, and sometimes he sold them. At the time of his death, in 1917, he owned a fairly extensive collection of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings, which included no fewer than thirteen Cézannes and the first version of van Gogh's "Sunflowers." He had sold "Irises" in 1905, however, to Auguste Pellerin, a much wealthier and more ambitious collector. It must have pained him to let the painting go. Mirbeau adored flowers; like his close friend Monet, he was a dedicated gardener. The writer Léon Daudet, Alphonse Daudet's son, remembered hearing Monet talk with Mirbeau one day about van Gogh's "Irises"—"a canvas that in Mirbeau's nervous, blond-haired hands shimmered gloriously in the light," Daudet notes. " 'How, ah! how,' Monet was saying, 'did a man who loved flowers and the light to such an extent, and who rendered them so well, how then did he still manage to be so unhappy?' "

ONE day in 1963, as Peter Wilson was dashing off to Zurich on business, he suggested that David Nash ride out to the airport in a taxi with him. On the way, Wilson asked him whether he would like to go and work in Sotheby's New York office. Nash said he would like that. "How soon could you leave?" Wilson asked. Nash said that he was having his twenty-first-birthday party the following week, but that he might be able to leave the week after that. "Couldn't you go the day after the party?" Wilson asked.

The New York office had by that time become an increasingly important part of Sotheby's operations. Although London was still the main international marketplace for sales in every category except contemporary art, a great deal of the material sold at the London Sotheby's and the London Christie's came from America, and a great deal went right back there afterward. (Michel Strauss remembers a painting by the Douanier Rousseau that was consigned to Sotheby's in 1963 by Fred Weisman, the Los Angeles collector; it was sold in London to a man who lived three houses down from Weisman in Beverly Hills.) John Carter, Sotheby's rare-book expert, had been making periodic tours of the United States since 1955—"beating up the West," he called it. In 1960, Wilson had sent Peregrine Pollen to open a permanent New York office. Pollen had all the right upper-class credentials—Eton, Oxford, aristocratic bearing, family estates in the Cotswolds and in Scotland—and he proved to be extremely successful in persuading Americans that their treasures would bring higher prices at Sotheby's than at Parke-Bernet, the leading New York auction house. In 1963, the year Nash arrived, Pollen's office sent more property to London for sale than Parke-Bernet handled during the entire year. There were several reasons for this in addition to Pollen's salesmanship. Parke-Bernet charged higher commissions than Sotheby's or Christie's, and it did not allow reserves: the consignor could bid on his own property if he thought that it was going for too little, but he did not have the security of a reserve price below which it would not be sold. In addition, Parke-Bernet did not offer Sotheby's or Christie's level of expertise. A typical Parke-Bernet auction might include furniture, porcelain, rugs, glassware, and jewelry as well as paintings and sculpture; the house had knowledgeable people for each category, but not highly specialized departments such as had been developed by the London auction houses. An American collector with important pictures to sell might well conclude that they would be in better—or, at least, more professional—hands at Sotheby's or Christie's than at Parke-Bernet. Not all of them did so. Sotheby's lost out to Parke-Bernet on the very important Erickson sale in 1961—the sale at which the Metropolitan Museum paid a record-shattering two million three hundred thousand dollars for Rembrandt's "Aristotle Contemplating the Bust of Homer." But from 1961 on the tide was running more and more in Sotheby's favor.

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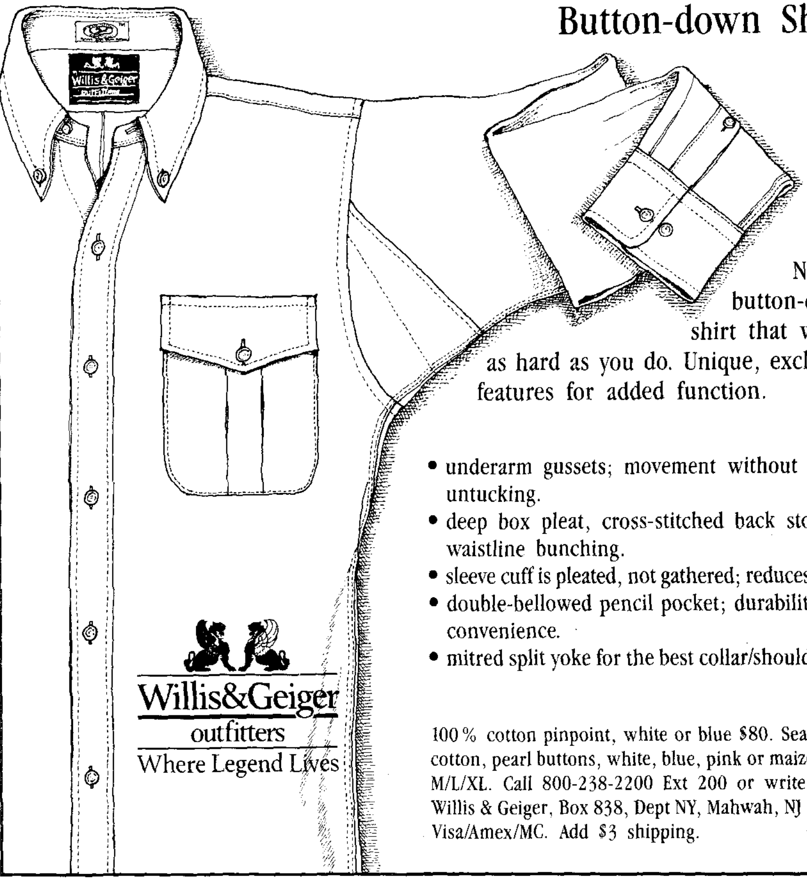
Nash played no part in the major auction-world event of 1964, which was Sotheby's takeover of Parke-Bernet. The New York auction house had been losing a lot of business to Sotheby's and Christie's, and the death, in 1963, of Leslie Hyam, an Englishman who had become an American citizen and was the real administrative head of the firm, had convinced Parke-Bernet's shareholders that it was time to sell. They entered into negotiations with Maurice Rheims, of the Hôtel Drouot, but in the end, and over the fervent opposition of Ralph Colin, the legal counsel to Parke-Bernet, they succumbed to the siren calls of Peter Wilson and Peregrine Pollen. The hostility that greeted the merger in American art circles was an odd switch in the national attitude, considering the fact that American capital was moving into England and other parts of Europe at a phenomenal rate during this period. What the New York dealers particularly resented was Sotheby's reputation for aggressive, freewheeling, American-style business methods.

Pollen alleviated some of these feelings by a tactful approach to the Parke-Bernet staff. He wanted to avoid wholesale resignations, and, in fact, only one senior member of the staff resigned—Robert Metzdorf, the book expert. Louis J. Marion, Parke-Bernet's chief auctioneer, who was fifty-five, left a year later, to run his own fine-art-appraisal business, but his son John stayed on at Parke-Bernet, with the tacit understanding that when Pollen returned to London to succeed Peter Wilson as head of the parent firm John Marion would step into the presidency in New York. Americans who admired aristocratic British manners were hugely impressed by Pollen, while those who detested them were reassured by Marion's bluff Irish friendliness. The new firm was more Sotheby's than Parke-Bernet. Specialized sales and secret reserves became the norm. The beautifully printed Parke-Bernet catalogues, with their chatty descriptions of works for sale, gave way to more businesslike publications, with more precise information. At the sales, though, the American style of auctioneering prevailed.

American auctioneers have always played up the theatrical aspects of a sale, singing out the bids, keeping up a flow of comments and quips, interspersed with occasional exhortations. John Marion, who inherited his father's mantle as chief auctioneer, is a virtuoso in this regard, although his style is not nearly so flamboyant as his father's. In London, the idea is to call a sale in a calm, unemphatic tone that makes even the most inflated prices sound perfectly unexceptional. Neither style seems to work in the other place. Peter Wilson, the master of the urbane soft sell, called a sale in New York soon after the takeover, and it went so badly that he never tried another.

While Nash and other members of Pollen's rapidly expanding staff travelled about in search of art for Marion to sell, the London office pushed through a stream of innovations, most of which were designed to make things more appealing to clients—buyers and sellers alike. Sotheby's was the first auction house to publish pre-sale estimates in its catalogues, and to decree that reserve prices would never exceed the low estimate. Without going so far as to guarantee the authenticity or the attribution of works of art made before 1870, Sotheby's provided much more detailed information on the history and provenance of its wares than auction houses had done in the past, and agreed to take back any work sold if the buyer could prove within five years of the sale that it was not what it was supposed to be. The firm also began publishing information about the condition of art works for sale.

An experiment of Pollen's that proved to be highly controversial, even within the firm, involved offering consignors a guaranteed minimum price for a work or a group of works in exchange for a higher commission. If the sale fell short of the guarantee, Sotheby's would pay up and own the work itself. The idea encountered a lot of internal opposition, because a couple of deals went sour. The more embarrassing of these came about in 1973, when Wilson himself negotiated a guaranteed sale of pictures from the collection of Norton Simon, the California millionaire. Most of the pictures were assigned fairly low reserves, but Simon insisted on a figure of a million four hundred thousand dollars apiece for the two most important lots, a Cézanne and a Manet. Nash and Pollen were appalled when they found out that Wilson had agreed to



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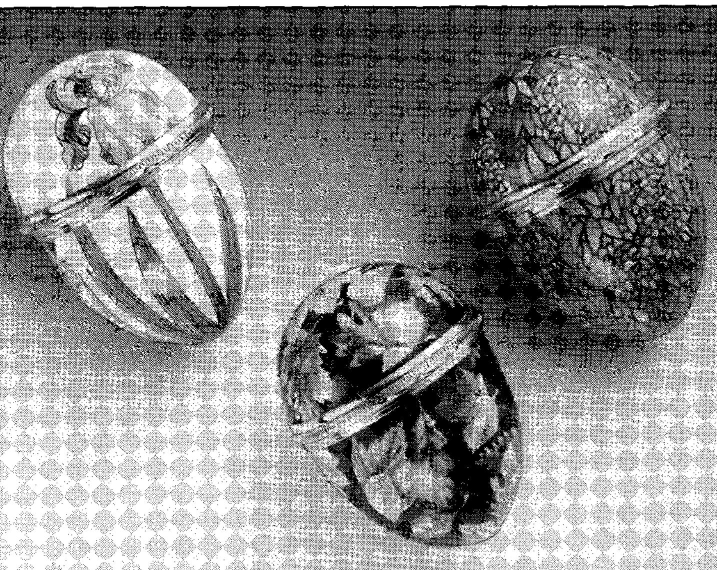

Little Nest Eggs

Festive egg boxes in hand-painted Battersea enamel, 2¼″ long, exclusively at Tiffany. From left: "Iris," $130. "Autumn Leaves," $150. "Wisteria," after an original Tiffany lamp design, $175.

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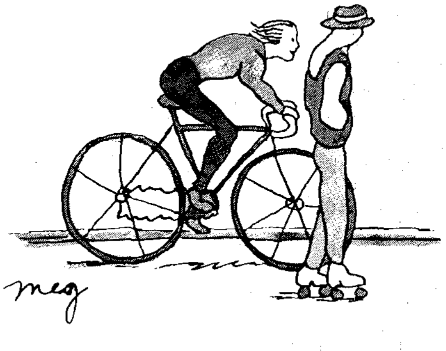
this. Their estimate on the Manet had been from six hundred thousand to eight hundred thousand dollars. "The Manet was a still-life with a dead fish," Nash recalls. "A very beautiful painting, but it is sort of conventional dealers' wisdom that paintings with dead fish in them don't sell. Anyway, for some reason Norton Simon changed his mind about the Cézanne and bought it back himself, so we were relieved of that anxiety. But the Manet didn't sell. We ended up owning it, for a million four. A few years went by, and the Von Hirsch sale came along. It was a very big sale, and Peter Wilson was eager for Simon to buy one of the Old Masters in it—the Lorenzo Monaco that was on the cover of our catalogue. So Simon pulled another of his clever deals. He agreed to give us a bid on the Lorenzo Monaco if Peter would sell him back the Manet for four hundred thousand dollars. He guessed that in Peter's mind the Manet was past history, and he was right, as usual—Peter agreed. Simon bought back the Manet for a million dollars less than he had sold it for. Peter's board of directors was not very pleased about that, I can tell you, but Peter dismissed it quite airily: 'We couldn't sell it, turn the page, on to the next thing.' "

What really put a damper on the guaranteed-sale experiment was the 1974 worldwide recession, brought on by the Middle East war and OPEC's large increase in the price of oil. Stocks plummeted, the Japanese buyers pulled out of the market, and Sotheby's and Christie's found themselves conducting auctions at which more than half the lots went unsold. (In the auction market, a recession does not usually bring lower prices; what happens is that fewer important works are consigned for sale, and a higher proportion of the lots fail to meet their reserve.) The market did not really pick up again until 1977, and meanwhile both firms had to fire people and take other steps to reduce costs. They also began charging the buyer a ten-per-cent fee for every lot sold. Christie's introduced this new charge in May of 1975, and Sotheby's followed two days later. It was obvious that by slapping a ten-per-cent surcharge on the buyer the auction houses would in some cases be able to reduce the commission they charged the seller, and so would gain an even greater advantage over the dealers. (Art dealers' commissions can run as high as fifty per cent.) The dealers were predictably outraged, but, as usual, they could do nothing about it.

Marion was in charge of the New York operation by this time. In 1972, Pollen had gone back to London, where his expectations of succeeding Peter Wilson progressively dimmed. Although Wilson himself had nourished those expectations, it was soon evident that the aging senior partner could not stand having an heir apparent on the premises, and felt no great urge to retire in any case. Wilson stayed on until 1979, sowing discord among his colleagues and presiding in his blithe way over a mounting management crisis, which would nearly destroy the firm during the next recession.

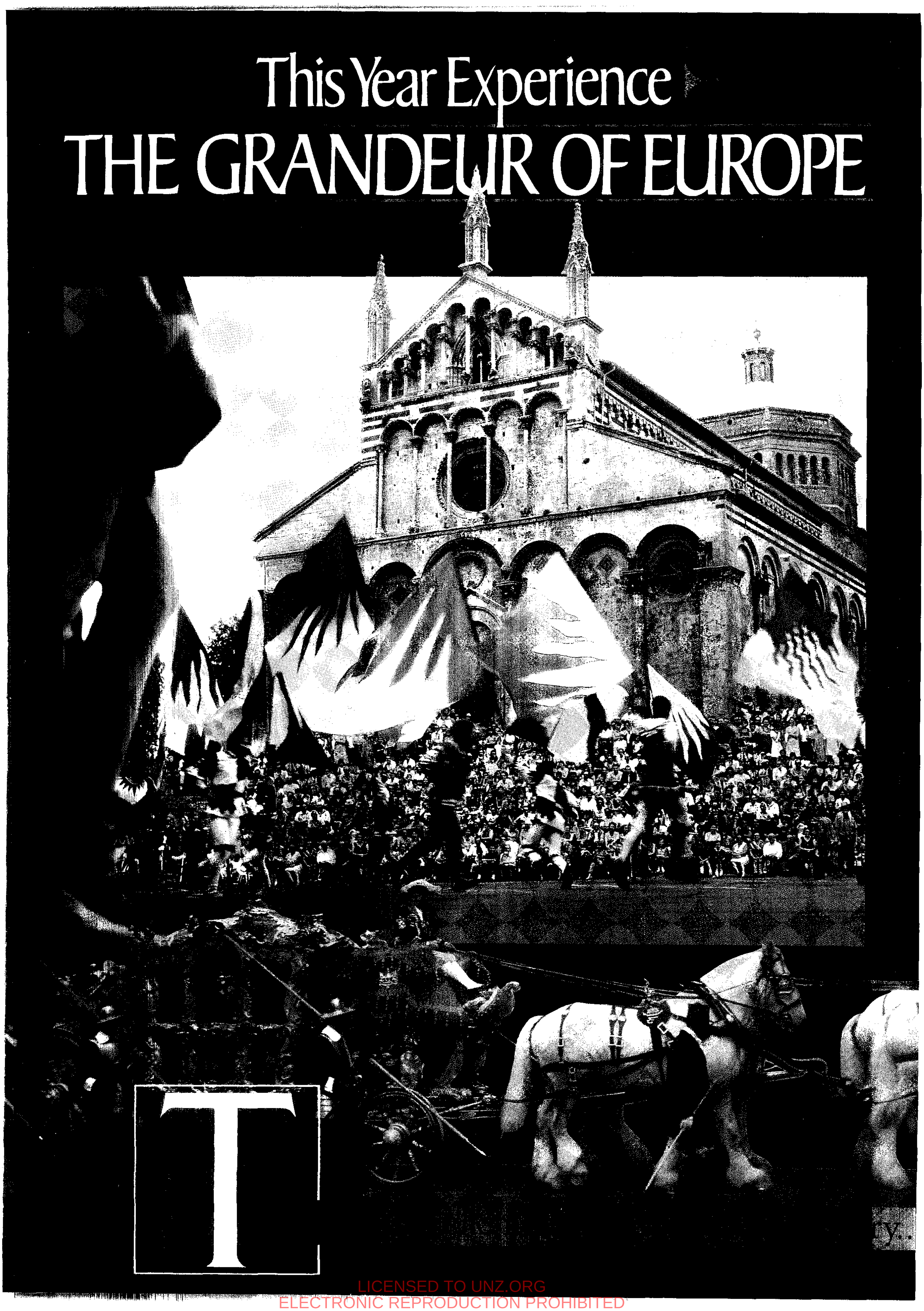
In 1977, just as the art market was starting to recover, Sotheby's found itself facing a new challenge from its ancient rival. Christie's decision to open a full-scale salesroom in New York, at Park Avenue and Fifty-ninth Street, reflected the more aggressive policies of its new management, and was the cause of considerable anxiety at Sotheby Parke Bernet. "We were very fearful that we would have to divide the existing market," Nash recalls. "What we hadn't anticipated was that the existing market would more than double in size. The increase in our turnover that year was larger than Christie's whole New York turnover. There was enough for everybody." The intensified competition between the two firms generated more business and higher prices, and the higher prices attracted still more business. It was during the next few years that the auction houses became the dominant force in the international art trade.

Sotheby's and Christie's were in a race to conquer the world. Sotheby's had salesrooms in Hong Kong, Monte Carlo, Beirut, and Los Angeles as well as in London and New York, and was opening branch offices in cities throughout the United States and Europe. Christie's expanded more cautiously, with stricter financial controls, but its operations were also worldwide. Both firms vied in the creation and development of new categories of auction goods—antique cars, fine wines, toys, rock-and-roll memorabilia. *Private Eye*, the London satirical fortnightly, parodied the ever-widening auction market with a Sotheby's-type ad for "Highly Important Joints of Beef and Mutton from the collection of Mrs. Enid Norris and others, including a very wonderful spare rib and a unique assortment of lamb chops (slightly foxed)." Sotheby's had made headlines in 1973 when it sold fifty paintings and sculptures from the collection of Robert C. Scull, the taxi-company owner, who had been one of the earliest patrons of Pop art; it was the first time that a large group of art works less than ten years old had been put up for auction, and fears that it might be a disaster for the artists involved evaporated in a glow of record prices.



In the booming art market of the late nineteen-seventies, though, Sotheby's expanded too far and too fast. By 1981, the firm was employing more than two thousand people. To relieve the overcrowded conditions at PB-84, a Sotheby Parke Bernet annex on Eighty-fourth Street that had been set up to handle lower-priced goods, the board of directors spent several million dollars to renovate a much larger building, on York Avenue, five blocks east of the firm's Madison Avenue headquarters. Sotheby's sales volume continued to rise, but its costs were soaring out of control, and overall profits declined as a result. The dreadful reckoning came in 1982, when another recession hit the art market and, for the first time since the war, Sotheby's reported an operating loss for the year. The bad news was compounded by gloating sounds from Christie's. Only five years after opening its New York salesroom, the rival firm was ahead in total sales.

Sotheby's responded to the crisis with management shakeups in London and New York. While Peter Wilson tried in vain to influence the proceedings by telephone from the South of France, to which he had retired, with great reluctance, in 1979, sober business types took over from the Wilson-era art experts and carried out drastic cutbacks in staff and overhead. The Los Angeles salesroom was closed, and so were a number of Sotheby's offices around the world. In June of 1982 came the traumatic announcement that



This Year Experience
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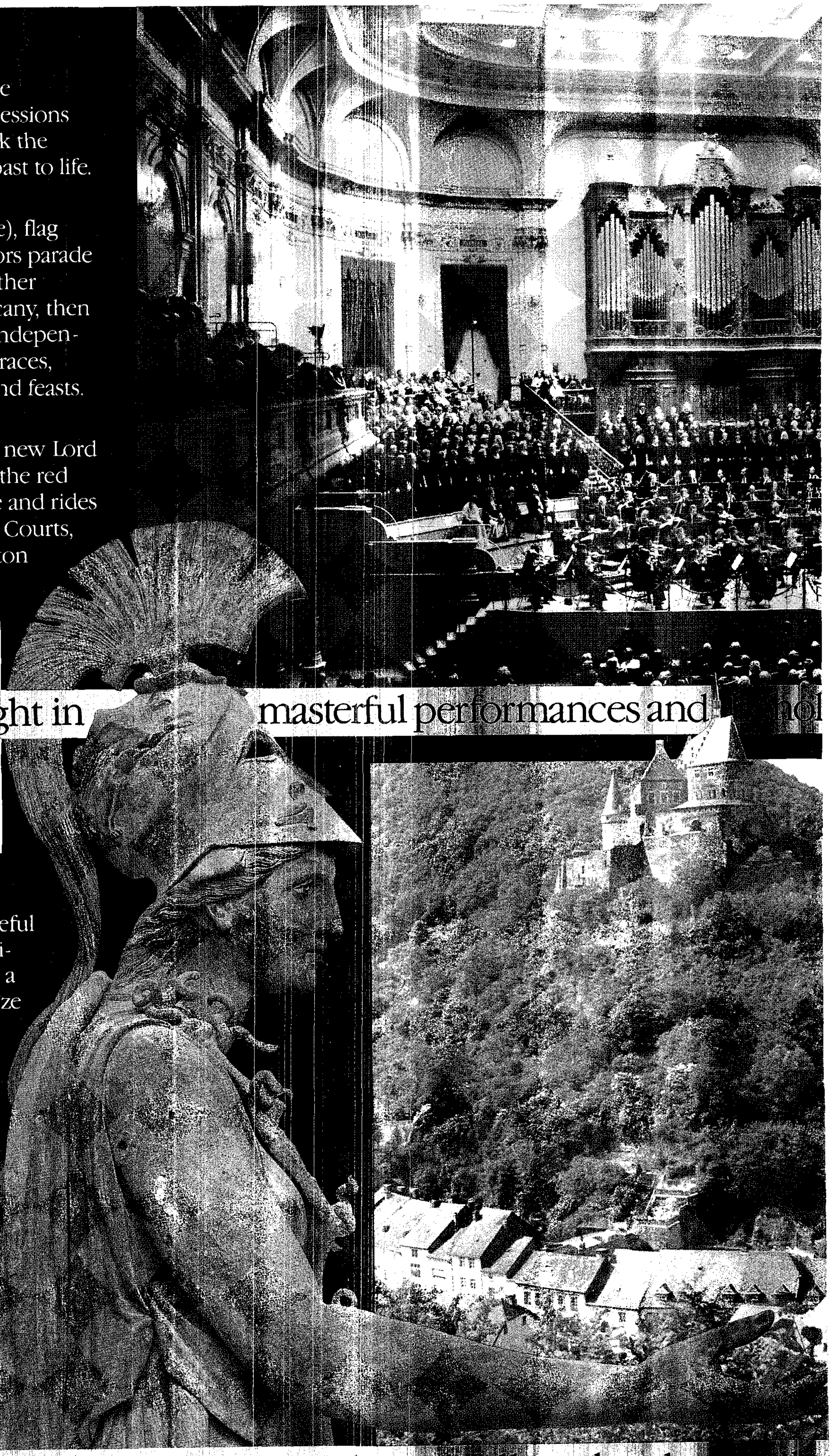
Pageantry is everywhere in Europe. Solemn processions and merry festivals mark the seasons and bring the past to life.

In **Italy** (preceding page), flag bearers in medieval colors parade in Sienna, Arezzo and other venerable towns of Tuscany, then celebrate their age-old independence with fierce horseraces, archery competitions and feasts.

Each year in **Britain**, a new Lord Mayor of London dons the red robes and gold of office and rides by carriage to the Royal Courts, much as Dick Whittington did 500 years ago.



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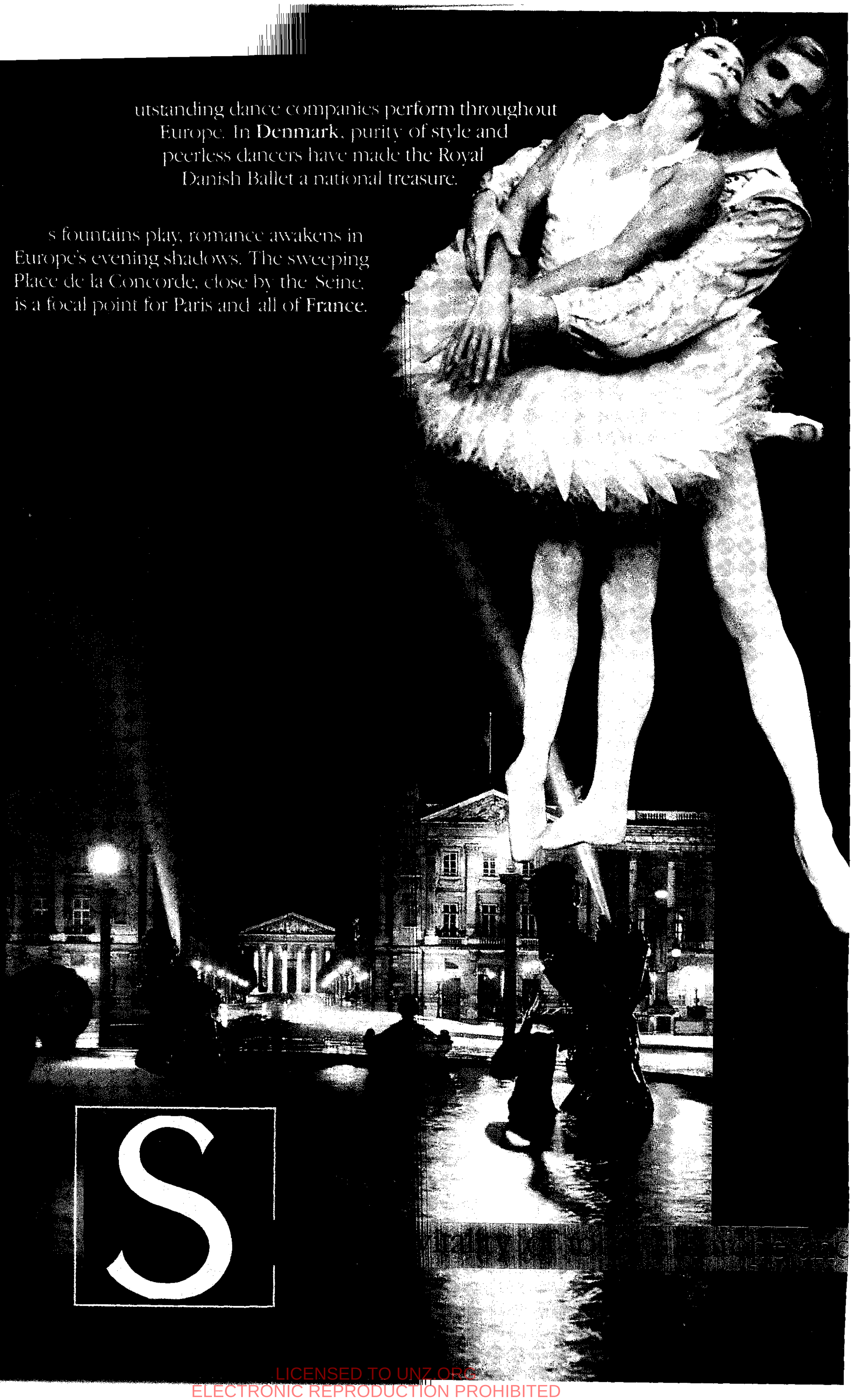
Echoes of the ancient world are heard in graceful ruins of forums, amphitheaters and temples to a hundred deities. A bronze Athena proffers eternal wisdom in her namesake city, the capital of **Greece**.

...trace the footsteps of ancient gods and fall under the utstanding dance companies perform throughout Europe. In **Denmark**, purity of style and peerless dancers have made the Royal Danish Ballet a national treasure.

s fountains play, romance awakens in Europe's evening shadows. The sweeping Place de la Concorde, close by the Seine, is a focal point for Paris and all of **France**.



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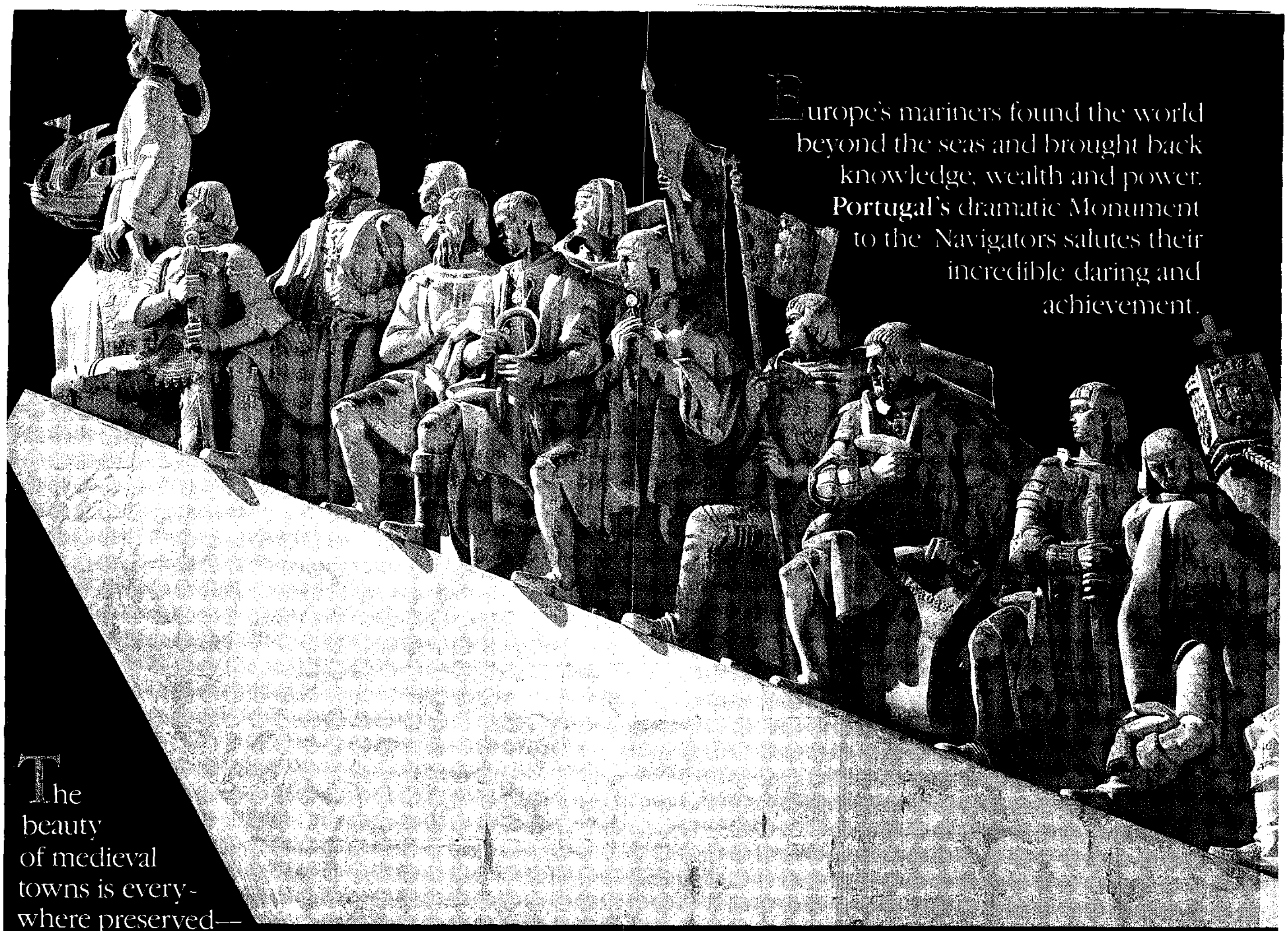

Europe's mariners found the world beyond the seas and brought back knowledge, wealth and power. **Portugal's** dramatic Monument to the Navigators salutes their incredible daring and achievement.

The beauty of medieval towns is everywhere preserved—and famously so in **Belgium**. The Grand Place remains the heart of Brussels with its centuries-old guild houses and inviting cafes and shops.

at the spectacular [illegible]

agner, Brahms, Verdi and Handel resound again and again in the opera houses and concert halls that first vibrated with their magic. Rivaled by few are the musicians of **The Netherlands'** renowned Concertgebouw orchestra.

owering strongholds of the Age of Chivalry stand vigilant over green valleys and quiet villages. **Luxembourg's** formidable Vianden Castle (below, left) is an ancestral home of the Grand Duchy's ruling family.

The artistic heritage of Europe is unmatched, from cave paintings to Rembrandt and Picasso. **Spain's** master, Velázquez, heralded a new realism in this portrait of the Infanta Margarita and her tireless maids, on view in the Prado museum.

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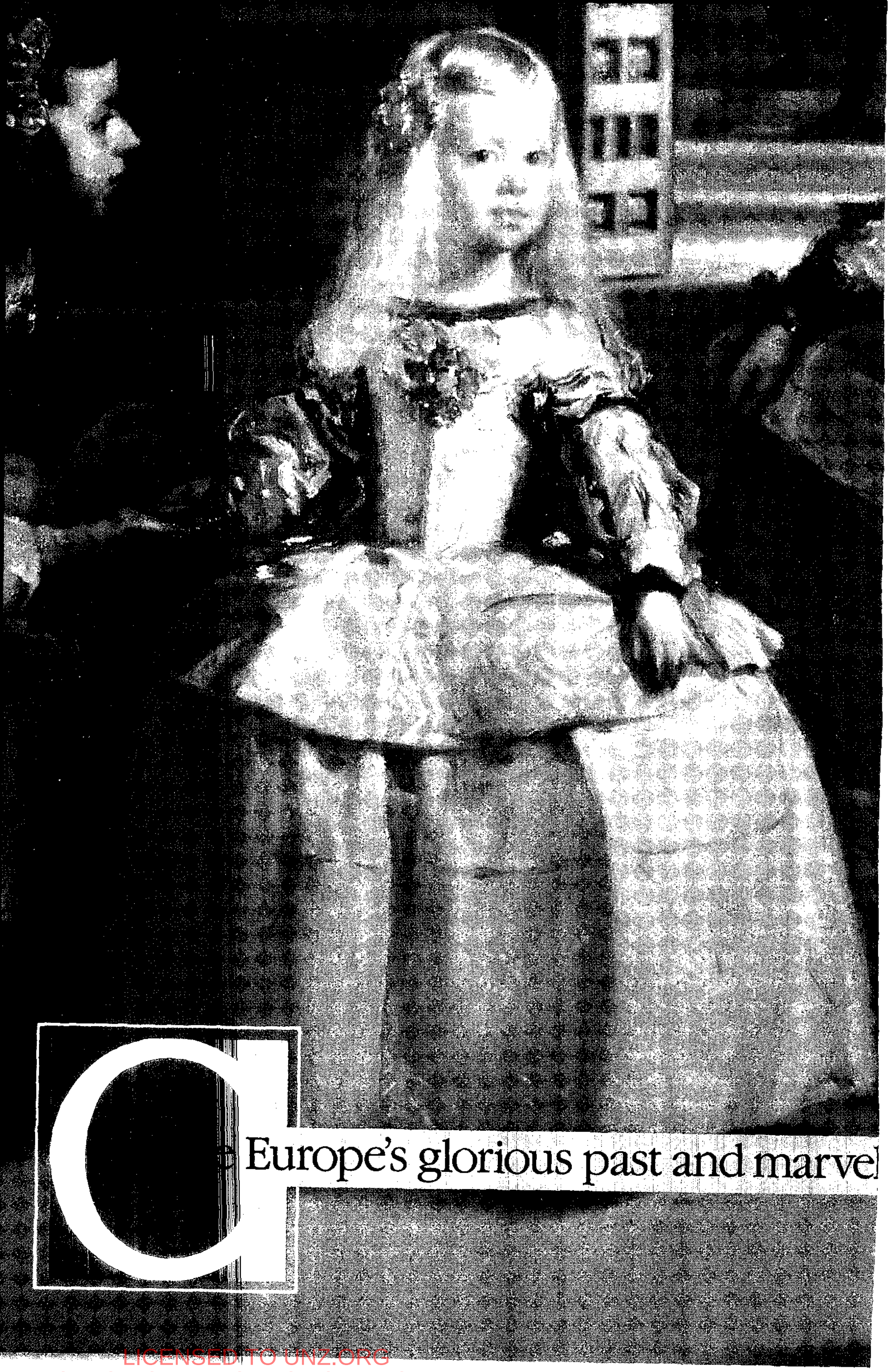
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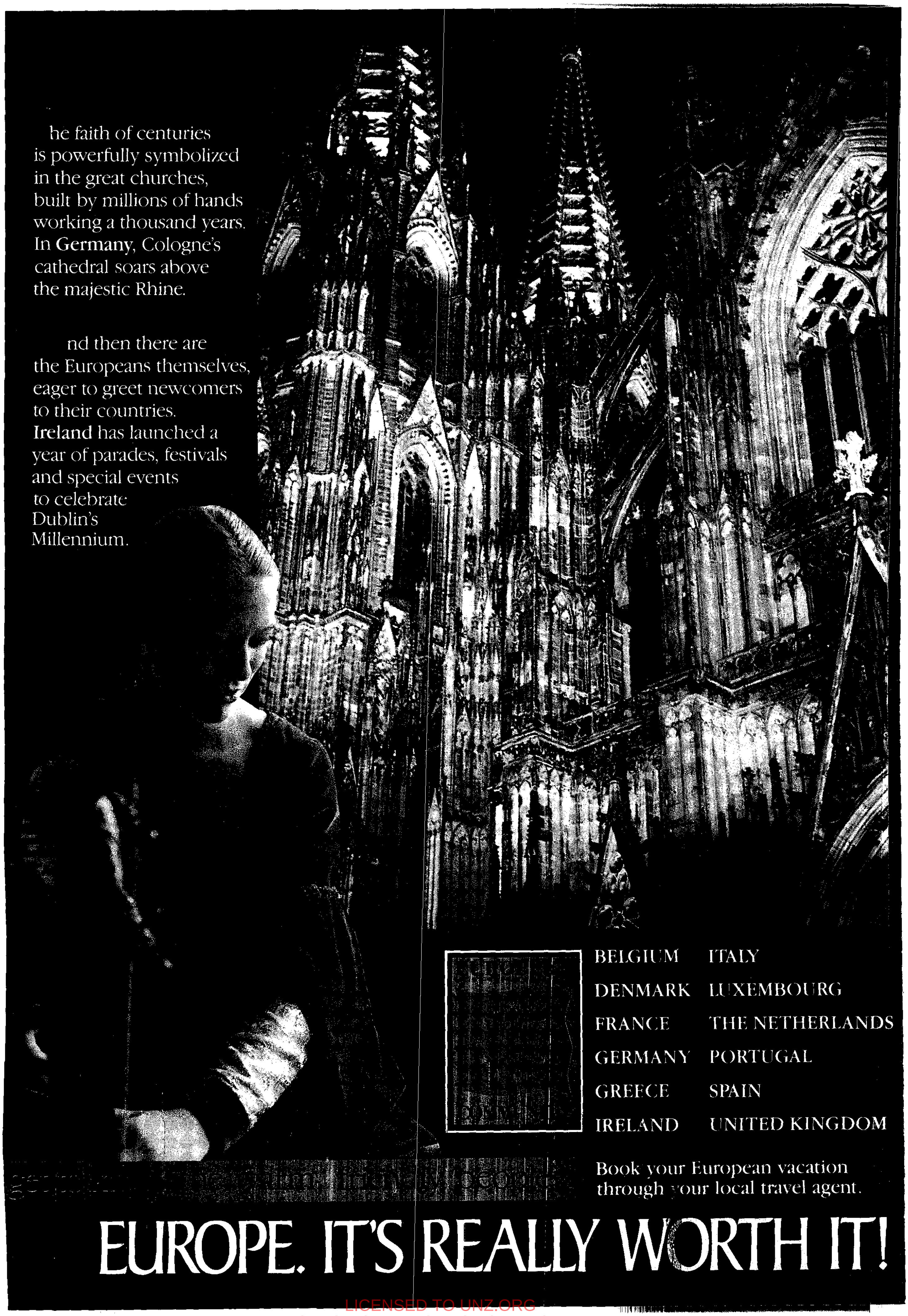
Europe's glorious past and marvel



he faith of centuries is powerfully symbolized in the great churches, built by millions of hands working a thousand years. In **Germany**, Cologne's cathedral soars above the majestic Rhine.

nd then there are the Europeans themselves, eager to greet newcomers to their countries. **Ireland** has launched a year of parades, festivals and special events to celebrate Dublin's Millennium.

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Sotheby's was giving up its elegant salesroom on Madison Avenue at Seventy-sixth Street and moving all its operations to York Avenue. This was a terrible blow to Nash and others; they feared that the York Avenue building, remote from the art world and standing in the gloomy shadow of several large hospitals, would never have the cachet of the old address. But the need for extreme measures was self-evident. "We in fact got the thing under control," Nash said later. "We had reached a point where if the next year had been a bad one, which we anticipated, we could still have made a profit on a much smaller turnover. But the damage was already done, because there had been rumors that Sotheby's was going out of business. There was no truth to the rumors, but in this business so much depends on confidence, and that just eroded. All of a sudden, we couldn't get anything good to sell. The Impressionist sale in London that June was the worst we'd ever had; there was hardly a decent picture in it. And then Cogan and Swid made their move."

Marshall Cogan and Stephen Swid, the two New York financiers whose bid to buy Sotheby's was announced that December, were genuinely abashed by the firm's violent opposition to them. They both collected modern art, they sat up straight at the table and used a knife and fork, and they were quite sure they could solve Sotheby's obvious management problems. Why on earth, then, was Sotheby's entire London staff of experts threatening to resign if they got control, and referring to them scathingly as Toboggan and Skid? The experts in New York were much more receptive to them—a circumstance that led to some bad feeling between the New York and London offices. The high, hard note of snobbism could be heard in London: it just would not do for a two-hundred-year-old British institution to be bought by a couple of unknown Americans whose financial resources were mostly on paper—they planned to borrow the cash from Citibank, and that led one of the London partners to complain, "We would be working for a bank." By buying up fourteen per cent of Sotheby's stock before announcing their intentions, moreover, Cogan and Swid had mounted what is known as a hostile-takeover action, and that did not endear them to anyone. The opposition forces in London, aided by the irrepressible Peter Wilson, who rushed back from the South of France to join the battle, managed by complex political maneuvering to get the Monopolies Commission—a famously inert, rubber-stamp agency—to assert its authority and insist on a six-month delay while it studied the matter. Time in this case worked against Cogan and Swid and their borrowed funds, and while the commission deliberated Sotheby's fell quite happily into the hands of a much richer American named Alfred Taubman.

A Detroit real-estate developer who specialized in shopping centers, Taubman had become one of the wealthiest men in America by engineering the purchase and subsequent resale of the Irvine Ranch, nearly seventy-eight thousand acres of private land on the Pacific Coast south of Los Angeles. He had divorced his first wife and married a former beauty queen who had once worked as a receptionist at Christie's in New York—a circumstance that led some wags to speculate that she had asked him to buy her Sotheby's as a wedding present. Taubman impressed the London partners as an acceptable white knight, however, and the New York contingent felt the same way.

About the time Taubman entered the picture, the New York staff was in the throes of a crucially important negotiation of its own. This involved the collection of the late Doris Havemeyer, the daughter-in-law of Henry O. and Louisine Havemeyer, who had given the Metropolitan many of its greatest paintings. There had been enough left over at home to provide Doris and her husband with what Nash described as a marvellous collection, with four or five absolutely first-rate Impressionist pictures. "But Christie's was in a much better position to get it than we were, because of all the rumors about our going bankrupt," Nash recalls. "We had to convince Morgan Guaranty Trust, which represented the estate, that Sotheby's would still be in business at the time of the sale, that I would be in charge of the sale, and that John Marion would be the auctioneer. The competition was not just with Christie's, either. A consortium of dealers that included Eugene V. Thaw and William Acquavella had put together a bid for the collection that was higher than our high estimate—something over thirteen million dollars. We used everything we could think of to get that sale, but we didn't believe we had much chance."

Hugh Hildesley, the man in charge of estates and trusts at Sotheby's then, was a friend of Doris Havemeyer's

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son, Harry. An immensely subtle persuader (he left Sotheby's in 1983 for the ministry, and is now the rector of the Episcopal Church of the Heavenly Rest, at Fifth Avenue and Ninetieth Street), Hildesley got Peter Wilson himself to fly over on the Concorde and help plan Sotheby's campaign. Together, they created a mockup of the lavish catalogue that Sotheby's would produce. They also did a great deal of research, to find out just what the Havemeyer family had given to the Metropolitan over the years. In the end, they knew the collection better than any of the heirs did. Sotheby's also impressed the heirs by its concern for the condition of the paintings, some of which were in rather poor shape. "One of the Monets had a large flake of paint that was about to fall off," Nash recalls, "so we got our restorer to come around and do some emergency work on it."

John Marion has vivid memories of the day of decision. A Morgan Guaranty officer had made an appointment to come to Marion's office at one o'clock. Marion's first thought was "Oh, God, they're coming to tell us why they're giving it to Christie's." He was looking out the window when a taxi pulled up with Harry Havemeyer and the Morgan Guaranty people. Marion called his secretary over to see what sort of auras they had—she knew about auras. By the time they got to his office, Marion was in a state of extreme anxiety.

"Have you had lunch?" Havemeyer asked him.

"Yes," Marion said, "but I haven't swallowed it."

"Oh, for God's sake," Havemeyer said. "Everything's fine. We want to do business with you."

Both Marion and Nash agree that getting the Havemeyer sale was like snatching a diamond out of the fire. It was a real turning point: soon afterward, the company that Taubman bought was on its way up again. The Havemeyer sale realized more than fifteen million dollars, and it signalled the start of the unparalleled rise in picture prices which has continued, with occasional interruptions, to the present day.

France was the birthplace of modern art, but the French paid no attention to it until foreigners like the Havemeyers had made off with most of the important works of modernism. There is some truth to this familiar charge, but the point has been overstressed. A number of French collectors did respond with perceptive enthusiasm to the new painting of the Impressionists and their successors. Auguste Pellerin, whose fortune came from the manufacture of margarine, began soon after the beginning of this century to build a large and splendid collection of Impressionist paintings, with emphasis on Manet and Cézanne. In 1904—the year before he acquired van Gogh's "Irises" from Octave Mirbeau—he bought eight Cézannes; he kept right on buying Cézannes for the next quarter century, and when he died, in 1929, he owned a hundred, reflecting every phase of the artist's career, and including such monumental works as the "Large Bathers," "A Modern Olympia," and two versions of "Card Players." His thirty-nine Manets ranged from the early "Lawn at Longchamp" to "The Bar at the Folies-Bergère," the late masterpiece that is now owned by the Courtauld Institute. This sort of dedication did not extend to van Gogh. At some point in the nineteen-twenties, Pellerin sold or traded "Irises" to the well-known Paris art dealer Bernheim-Jeune. In the mid-twenties, Bernheim-Jeune sold the painting to Jacques Doucet, the couturier, who was one of the most remarkable collectors of that or any other era.

Doucet was a figure straight out of Proust; in fact, Proust mentions him several times in "À la Recherche du Temps Perdu." When Odette finally marries Swann, her pastel at-home gowns are designed by Doucet; Albertine, who is instructed in the art of fashion by the painter Elstir, wears in one scene a Doucet peignoir whose sleeves are lined in pink. Doucet's only rival as a dress designer for the beau monde that Proust described was Frédéric Worth, who had virtually created the profession of couturier. This was still the era of the *femme ornée*, whose clothes proclaimed certain aspects of the social order. Fashionable society moved in a stately rhythm of fixed occasions, and each occasion demanded its own costume. A lady required morning dresses, visiting dresses, garden-party dresses, ball dresses, dresses for evening parties, dresses for the country, for the château, for the casino, for the racecourse, for weddings and funerals and baptisms. Strict traditions governed the style of each ensemble. Doucet was no revolutionary; he worked within the traditions, establishing a reputation for superior quality through exquisite

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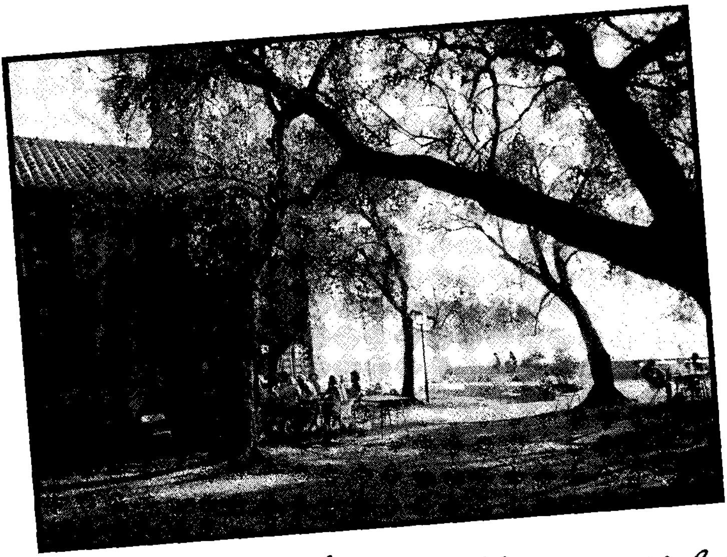

In the Julian alps, we tramped through the wildflower fields we could see from our snug, crisp-sheeted room. It was only $25. for the night. For a little more than twice that we could have stayed in its palatial counterpart, cushiony with damask sofas and Persian carpets.

On up the coast that could have been the Riviera of Hemingway, Fitzgerald or Cole Porter, we hired a cruiser for the day ($35.) and found a whole island we could have rented for the night.

Back at our hotel, we dined on a mountain of prawns with a delicious local wine that wouldn't be found anywhere else. The check didn't come to $30., including the moonlight.

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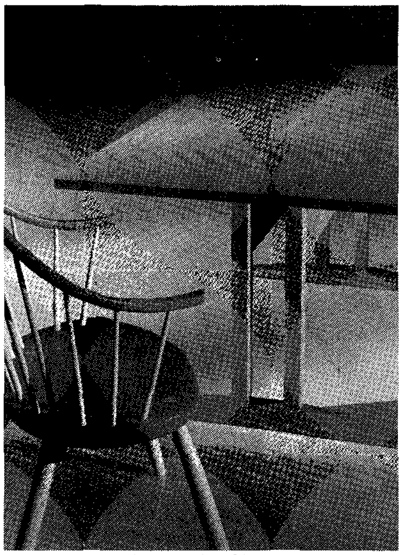

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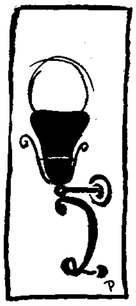
workmanship and fine materials. His clothes allowed greater suppleness and freedom of movement than those of other designers, though, and his use of pastels and subtle color harmonies was widely admired.

Doucet formed not one but three important picture collections, to say nothing of his collections of furniture and decorative arts, or of two scholarly libraries that he gave to the University of Paris. He started buying Impressionist paintings when he was twenty-one—mainly Degas and Monet, who had very few other clients at that time, the early eighteen-seventies. It was often said that the Impressionists influenced his choice of colors as a couturier. Then, in 1875, he bought a drawing by Watteau, and over the next decade he devoted himself primarily to the eighteenth century. He bought brilliantly and obsessively, acquiring superb paintings by Watteau, Boucher, Fragonard, Chardin, de la Tour, Nattier, Hubert Robert, and Largillière. He installed these, together with porcelains and furniture by the eighteenth-century masters, in a large town house he had bought for this purpose on the Rue Spontini, and there they were admired by *le tout Paris* of aristocrats, wealthy bourgeois, and literary and theatre people who were his clients. In 1912, though, he moved out of this house and put the entire eighteenth-century collection up for sale. *Le tout Paris* was intensely eager to know why—all the more so because Doucet himself was so aloof and secretive. The rumor was that he had bought and furnished the house for the one great love of his life, a married woman whose death in a riding accident had thrown him into despair. (Doucet's first wife had died, and he married for the second time in 1919.) Doucet recovered, in any case, and was soon back in the market for Impressionist and Post-Impressionist pictures.



He bought van Gogh's "Irises" from Bernheim-Jeune rather late in his career, in 1925. There is no record of what he paid for it. The picture does not seem to have been a particular favorite of his, and it does not appear in any of the published photographs of the Doucet house on the Avenue du Bois—the successor to the Rue Spontini mansion. By the time he bought it, his main interest had shifted to the period of his third major collection, the twentieth century.

Guided and cajoled by André Breton, the young poet he had hired in 1919 as a part-time secretary and librarian, Doucet went to Picasso's studio in 1923 and bought "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon." Breton was amazed that Picasso had agreed to part with this, one of the key paintings of his early career and of modern art, for a mere twenty-five thousand francs—then about five thousand dollars. (The money was to be paid in monthly installments of two thousand francs.) Doucet's highly effective technique, which he also used on Miró, Max Ernst, Picabia, Duchamp, Chagall, and others, was to tell the artist that the major works in his collection would be willed to the Louvre when he died, thus insuring the painter's immortality. Doucet did leave a number of great pictures to the Louvre, among them Henri Rousseau's "La Charmeuse de Serpents." But "Demoiselles" was purchased from his estate by the sharp-eyed Alfred A. Barr for the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and many other works that Doucet had owned passed into private collections.

Toward the end of his life, Doucet bought more and more actively and adventurously. He sold his business—he had always been ashamed of being a dress designer—and devoted himself mainly to art. He became interested in avant-garde cinema. He financed the construction of Marcel Duchamp's "Rotary Demisphere," and underwrote many of the Surrealists' publications and performances. He remarked in 1926, "I have formed, successively, my grandfather's collection, my father's, and my own."

"Irises" came to this country for the first time in 1929, when Alfred Barr borrowed it from Doucet's widow for the Museum of Modern Art's first big loan exhibition, "Cézanne, Gauguin, Seurat, van Gogh." In 1943, it was shown here again, in an exhibition at Wildenstein & Company called "The Art and Life of Vincent van Gogh," but by this time the owner was Jacques Seligmann, one of the leading Paris galleries, which had acquired it from Mme. Doucet's estate. The delicate maneuverings of art dealers are private matters, and there seems to be no way of finding out exactly what happened next. Seligmann either sold or consigned the picture to César de Hauke, a former

Seligmann employee who had become an independent dealer; he had a beautiful house in Paris, where he lived and entertained in tremendously elegant style. Dealers usually know what other dealers have on hand, however, and when the right moment or the right client comes along they can almost always manage to collaborate on a deal. At any rate, in 1947, Carman Messmore, of M. Knoedler & Company, in New York, arranged to sell "Irises" to Joan Whitney Payson. The price was eighty-four thousand dollars, and to Mrs. Payson, one of the richest women in America, it seemed scandalously high.

DERMATOLOGY
US
Joseph Farris

"My trigger finger is itchy."

• •

Joan Payson was not one of your damaged, long-suffering American heiresses. She was a big, strapping woman with a booming laugh, five children, and a big, strapping, golf-playing husband, whom she adored. (Some of her friends could never see why.) Having inherited half of the nation's third-largest private fortune when her father, the financier Payne Whitney, died, in 1927—the other half went to her brother, John Hay (Jock) Whitney—she and her husband had enormous fun doing just what they wanted with it. Horse racing and baseball were her public passions. When her horses were running at Belmont or Saratoga, she would cheer them on while listening to the Mets game on a transistor radio. She knew every player on the Mets—the team that owed its existence largely to her money and her determination to make New York a National League city once again, after the Giants and the Dodgers migrated to California. She invested in Broadway plays and in the movie "Gone With the Wind," and theatre people and Hollywood stars came to her parties. Every year, the Paysons threw a huge party on the Fourth of July, at the six-hundred-acre estate in Manhasset, Long Island, that Joan and Jock inherited from their parents. Several hundred guests drifted from room to room in the Paysons' fieldstone mansion, danced all night to the music of Emil Coleman's twenty-piece band, or wandered down to the Stanford White pool house, on a vast carpet that the servants had unrolled to protect the perfect lawn from the women's high heels. There were two other swimming pools on the estate, one indoor and one outdoor. There were also stables, kennels, a polo field, a movie theatre, a private gym, three grass tennis courts, and a nine-hole golf course. Having fun was not a big problem.

The elder Whitneys had bought pictures—by Rembrandt, Goya, and Sargent, among other painters—and it was only natural for Joan and her brother to carry on that family tradition. Joan became a collector at the age of sixteen, when she persuaded her parents to buy her a Degas painting of young girls jumping their ponies over a hedge. Grown up and married (in 1924) to Charles Payson, then a recent big-time Yale athlete, she leaned toward Impressionist and later works. (Her husband, who came from Maine, favored outdoor scenes by New England artists, especially Winslow Homer.) She bought mostly from Carman Messmore, a tall, genial Englishman who knew just how to tease her out of her reluctance to pay high prices. "Oh, come on, Joan," he would say. "Don't be stingy." Not long after he sold her a very fine Picasso "Harlequin" painting, Messmore told her she had to buy Picasso's "Absinthe Drinkers," a Blue Period masterpiece that had just come on the market. She balked, saying she already had the Blue Period "Harlequin." Messmore said grandly, "We'll take the 'Harlequin' back"—and Knoedler did. It is now in Baron Thyssen's country house, in England.

Eighty-four thousand dollars was a lot of money to pay for an Impressionist picture in 1947—eleven years before the Goldschmidt sale. The Paysons treated "Irises" accordingly. At first, Joan Payson was not happy about the frame it was in—a severe, unadorned rectangle of dark mahogany. She had Knoedler try a number of different frames, but none of them seemed right; finally, she went back to the dark mahogany. (Some authorities believe that this frame was put on by Carman Messmore, but both Messmore's widow and Ronald Pickvance, the art historian and leading van Gogh expert, are convinced that it was selected by Jacques Doucet; several paintings that Doucet bequeathed to the Louvre have similar frames.) "Irises" hung first in the Paysons' large apartment at 2 East Eighty-eighth Street, where they lived during the week. When they moved, a few years later, to an even grander apartment, at 960 Fifth Avenue, the picture was given the place of honor over the mantel in the living room, where it caught the light from the Fifth Avenue windows. Joan Payson had the room redecorated for the painting, in a shade derived from the reddish-brown patch of earth in the left foreground. The result was quite ghastly, according to her son John's recollection, but nothing could diminish the freshness and radiance of the painting. "Irises" was in good company at 960 Fifth. John Payson says, "On the side wall, water flowed past the lady in 'Te Poipoi,' by Gauguin. And on the end wall was a lake of flamingos—'Les Flamants,' by Rousseau."

Mrs. Payson always performed the duties that her vast wealth visited upon her. She served for many years on the board of trustees of the Metropolitan Museum. "She was a wonderfully good-hearted, good-natured, upbeat person," Ashton Hawkins, the museum's executive vice-president and legal counsel, recalls. "On our acquisitions committee, she was a joy. She had a well-trained eye and exuberant reactions. She liked many things that were strange to her—African sculpture, for example—and when she saw something she liked she would very often help pay for its acquisition. She loved coming to meetings, talking to curators and learning from them. But she had a habit of turning up for them a week early or a week late, so we took to sending her telegrams as reminders."

Late in her life, as befits a rich trustee, she pledged a substantial gift to the Met—five million dollars, to be paid in five equal installments. (In her will, she gave the Met forty-five paintings from her collection.) When she died, of a stroke, in 1975, only three installments had been paid. The Met requested that her estate make the last two payments as scheduled, but for a year and a half no money was forthcoming. The lawyers for the estate then announced that the pledge was unenforceable, because she had never put it in writing. "The family in effect turned against us," Hawkins says, "all except John Payson, who stayed pretty much out of it. It was very painful, because we all had loved Joan Payson." The case went to court and was decided in favor of the Metropolitan.

Before Joan Payson died, she asked each of her four surviving children which paintings they would like to inherit. (Her elder son, Daniel, had been killed in Germany, in the Battle of the Bulge.) John's first choice was "Irises." It was by this time the most valuable picture in the entire collection, according to the estate appraisal that was made, for tax purposes, by Sotheby's; David Nash put a value of two million dollars on it in 1975. John Payson believes that his mother gave it

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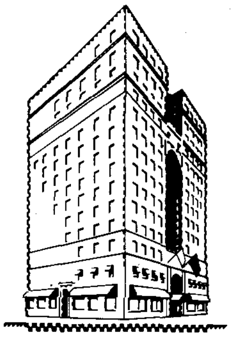

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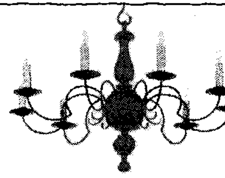

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to him, along with the twenty-seven other paintings, because of his deep feeling for it, and also because of his plan to establish a small museum at Westbrook College.

John Payson had become a professional art dealer. In 1971, after spending several years in the cosmetics business—"which I learned to hate," he says—he and his wife, Nancy, had moved to Florida and opened a small gallery in Hobe Sound, where they sold pictures by New England artists that John himself collected. "My focus was always on artists of New England," he has said. "Mostly Maine." Payson had spent his childhood summers in Maine, and he and Nancy continued to summer there after they moved to Hobe Sound. Nancy was on the board of trustees of Westbrook College—she had been a student there when she and John met. Over the years, John, who attended Bowdoin, became more and more involved in Westbrook's development as a small liberal-arts college, and before his mother died he had conceived his plan to build a museum there to receive and put on public view the paintings that he would inherit. (The plan was not affected by the Paysons' divorce and John's remarriage.) The Joan Whitney Payson Gallery of Art opened to the public in 1977. The gallery itself, a spare, modernist cube designed to accommodate later additions, was not particularly inspiring, but the core collection of twenty-eight pictures, ranging over the centuries from Sir Joshua Reynolds to Andrew Wyeth, immediately established it as the most important college museum in the state. All the pictures, including Degas's "La Leçon de Danse," Monet's "Le Printemps à Argenteuil," and van Gogh's "Irises," were on permanent loan from John Payson.

A number of Portland citizens were distinctly surprised to learn that in this case "permanent" did not mean what they had assumed it to mean. Judith Sobol, the director of the gallery, had been soliciting grants from public and private sources on the basis of its permanent collection, whose paintings "will come to us either by gift or by bequest." She had been able to cite a 1979 letter from John Payson in which he stated that it was his "intention to either donate or bequeath those of my paintings which are in the permanent collection of the Joan Whitney Payson Gallery of Art at Westbrook College to (the same)." But the operative word here turned out

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to be “intention”—a word that is not legally binding. John Payson’s loan began to lose its permanence on March 30, 1987, the day van Gogh’s “Sunflowers” was put on sale at Christie’s by descendants of an Anglo-Irish collector and was knocked down to the Yasudo Fire & Marine Insurance Company, of Tokyo, for thirty-nine million nine hundred thousand dollars.

The auction market had been building up to this takeoff point for five years. Ever since 1983, record prices had been the rule at almost every major sale. The highs for Impressionist pictures had climbed from one or two million dollars in the early nineteen-eighties to eleven million in 1986, for Manet’s “Rue Mosnier with Street Pavers.” Old Master paintings had risen in proportion—ten million four hundred thousand dollars in 1985 for Mantegna’s “Adoration of the Magi” (Christie’s, London); ten million three hundred thousand dollars in 1986 for Rembrandt’s “Portrait of a Young Girl Wearing a Gold-Trimmed Cloak” (Sotheby’s, London)—while furniture, jewelry, and every other category of objects continued to reach new levels month after month. Contemporary art was particularly hot. Lucy Mitchell-Innes scored a great coup when she persuaded both Ethel Scull and the executors of the late Robert Scull’s estate to sell what remained of the Sculls’ legendary collection at Sotheby’s in 1986. The two sales brought a total of twelve million six hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and equalled the record for the work of a living artist when Jasper Johns’ “Out the Window” went to the publisher S. I. Newhouse for three million six hundred and thirty thousand dollars. “There are so many more collectors now,” Mitchell-Innes has observed. “And there’s a whole new level of disposable income. Some of the new people buy only at auction. They seem to like the auction-room atmosphere, which is sometimes like a roomful of Roman gladiators. And they like the feeling that there is always an underbidder—they’re not alone up there exercising their taste.”

Everyone agrees that a whole new class of collectors has jumped into the auction market—Reagan-era tycoons who have made a lot of money very quickly in fields such as arbitrage, corporate takeovers, and real-estate development. There are well over a million millionaires in the United States today, and more and more of them seem to be buying art. Sotheby’s, which gained financial flexibility when Taubman turned it into a private American corporation, based in Detroit, began around 1983 to arrange very large bank loans for clients who wanted to bid on the top lots at auction. The firm has arranged loans of up to eight million dollars to a single client, and it will also advance large sums to sellers before a sale. (The option of guaranteeing a sale, as Pollen did in the early seventies, is used, too, but very rarely.) Christie’s also makes loans to buyers and sellers, although less often than Sotheby’s, and on a smaller scale. The imposition of the buyer’s premium has given both auction houses a way to reduce the commission they charge sellers; in some hotly contested cases, it has been reduced to zero. The ferocious competition between Christie’s and Sotheby’s helps to accelerate the upward spiral of prices, and the upward spiral persuades more and more collectors and institutions to consign their holdings to Sotheby’s or Christie’s.

Some art dealers speak scathingly of the new buyers’ motives. “Where else can somebody spend ten million dollars and make it public without seeming totally vulgar?” Arnold Glimcher, the owner of the Pace Gallery, said recently. Glimcher said that he knew of people who simply wanted to spend a million dollars on a picture—it hardly mattered which one. According to Eugene V. Thaw, the greatly respected private dealer, there are very few passionate, dedicated collectors around, and virtually no new ones. “What you get now are people who buy and sell, who are in it for the money,” he says. Even Christopher Burge, the head man at Christie’s in New York and an expert on Impressionist and modern art, has expressed concern about recent trends. “You see all these record prices for things that often are not first-rate, and you feel there will probably be a shakeout,” Burge said. “A lot of people have all this money and no really passionate involvement. It’s certainly true that we notice a difference in our customers. They don’t want to talk to our experts; they talk to our customer-service people.”

RECIPES
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Judith Shahn

Another new element is the increasing importance of Japanese buyers. The Japanese had been a major factor in the early nineteen-seventies, too, but when the 1974 recession hit the market they were unhappy to discover that the rather undistinguished Impressionist and School of Paris pictures they had been buying at auction were worth less than they had paid for them. For several years after that, they stayed away from the sales, but now they are back in force, bidding aggressively and taking full advantage of a favorable exchange rate, which has caused a dramatic rise in the yen against the dollar since 1985. In some recent Impressionist sales, thirty or forty per cent of the lots have gone to Japanese, often at record prices. There are even signs of a new adventurousness on the part of Japanese buyers, though on the whole their areas of interest remain fairly circumscribed: Impressionism at its sweetest (especially Renoir) and the less demanding School of Paris moderns—Chagall, Utrillo, Marie Laurencin, and the Japanese-born Foujita. “I’ve always found it odd that the Japanese, whose own art is so austere, tend to like the most sentimental kinds of Western art,” David Nash once observed. “But then there is Mr. Kameyama.”

Shigeki Kameyama—or Mountain Tortoise, as he likes to be referred to in English (that is the literal translation of Kameyama)—is a great rarity: an eccentric Japanese. He has been buying Western art for about ten years, and, according to Nash, he has an unerring eye for top quality in a wide spectrum of styles. His first purchase at Sotheby’s was an Egon Schiele watercolor, and he has since bought very important works by Rothko, Mondrian, Dubuffet, Léger, Henry Moore, Klimt, and other Western artists not usually associated with Japanese taste. When Mountain Tortoise comes to Sotheby’s during office hours, Nash sometimes hides. His visits often last for hours, since he requires a great deal of information on a great many subjects. He speaks no English. The young women he brings along to translate for him sometimes become so embarrassed by his language that they refuse to go on translating. At expensive restaurants where

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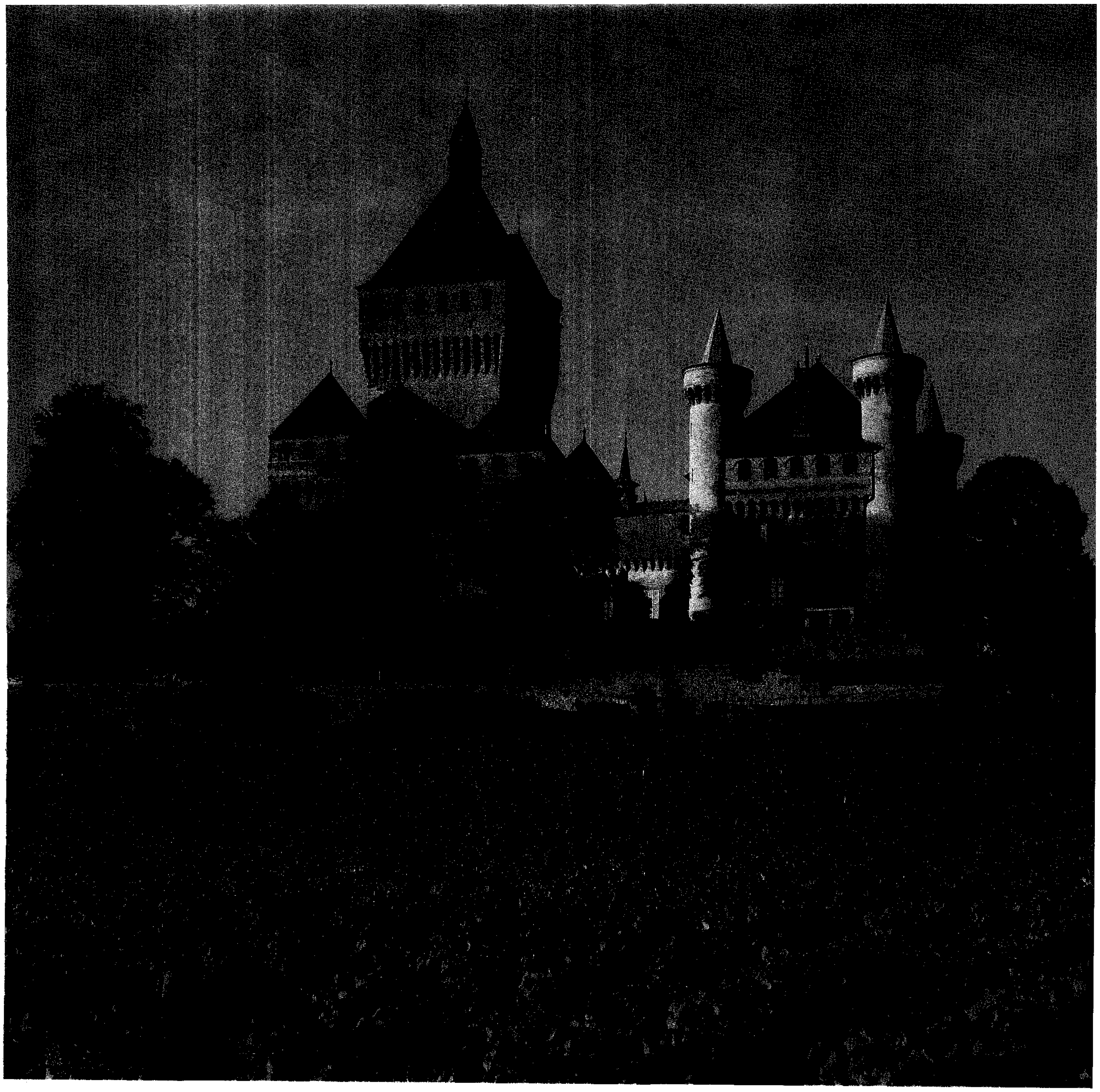

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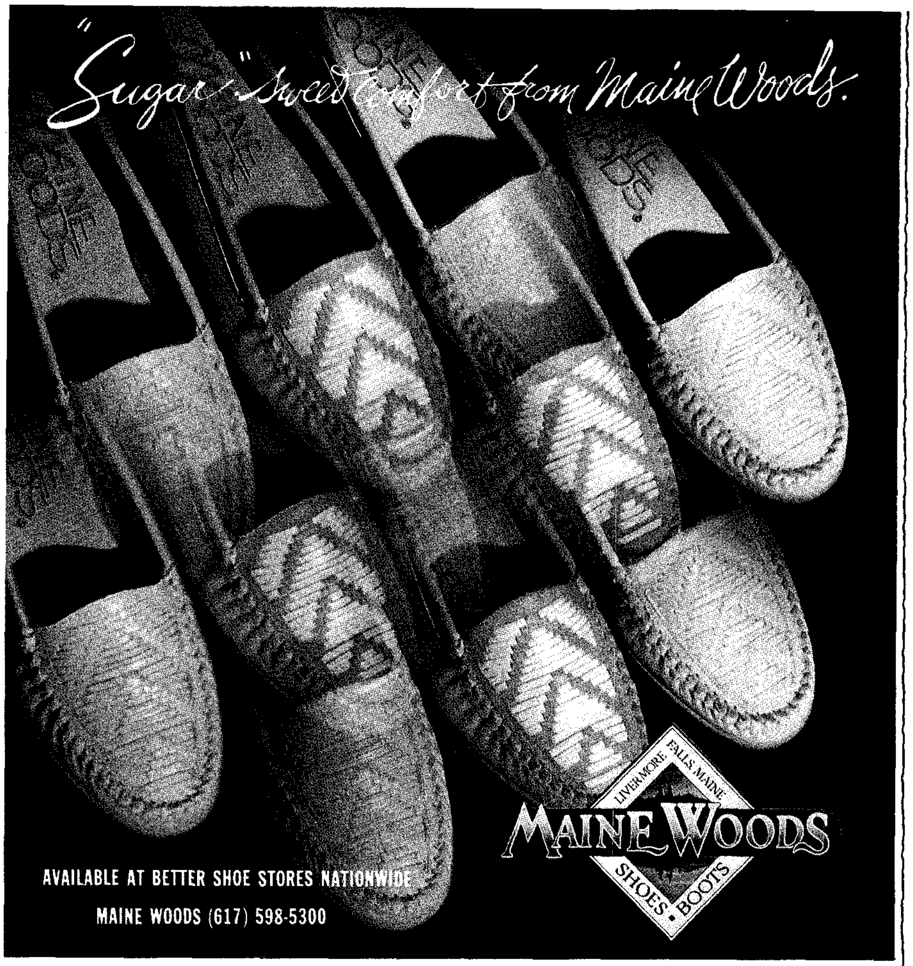
Mountain Tortoise insists on taking the Nashes whenever he is in town, he has been known to go to sleep after a few drinks and lie on the floor until the conclusion of the meal. Nash nevertheless likes the man. He has been to the Kameyama house in Tokyo. There are no pictures on the walls there, he says. The pictures are downstairs, in boxes, from which a servant extracts them for the few minutes that the viewer can bear to remain in the Arctic grip of the basement's air-conditioning system. No one knows the source of Kameyama's fortune, or what he plans to do with his increasingly impressive collection. He can scarcely pronounce the names of the artists he buys, but he has made very few mistakes. Some of Sotheby's female employees are not overwhelmingly fond of Kameyama, who tends to express his feelings for women by commenting on the size of their breasts, but everyone else at Sotheby's recognizes what good luck it is that he has become an admirer of David Nash. Kameyama believes that Nash has "the best brain in the auction business."

THE auction market had been building up for five years, but who could have predicted that it would go through the roof for van Gogh's "Sunflowers"? One of a series of still-lifes that the artist painted in 1888 and 1889, when he was living in Arles, this version, consigned by descendants of the Anglo-Irish collector Chester Beatty, was not in the best condition. Its yellows had lost a lot of their original intensity. Another Arles-period van Gogh, "Landscape with Rising Sun," had gone for nine million nine hundred thousand dollars at Sotheby's in 1985, though, and the "Sunflowers" pictures were what the trade calls signature paintings—works that seem to sum up an artist's best (or best-known) qualities. Christie's pre-sale estimate for the picture was from ten to fifteen million. The bidding duel that drove the price to more than double the high estimate threw the art world into a state of shock. Could this really be the new price level for major Impressionist and Post-Impressionist pictures, or was thirty-nine million nine hundred thousand dollars an absurd aberration, a fluke? The Yasuda Fire & Marine Insurance Company had obviously been determined to pay whatever was necessary. (Another "Sunflowers" painting, owned by Koyata Yamamoto, had been destroyed during the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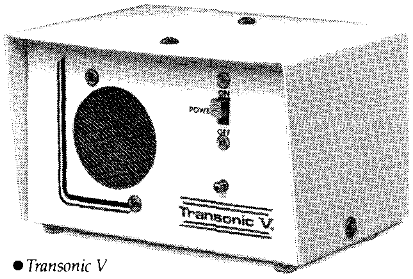

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bombing of Yokohama during the Second World War, so Yasuda may have felt that in a sense it was replacing a part of the nation's heritage.) The Australian brewery owner Alan Bond, who was the underbidder, had been equally determined to get it, and the contest between these two had been one of those imponderable elements that make auctions unpredictable. But would other bidders ever go that high, or would van Gogh's auction price settle back to a more realistic level? The answer came three months later, when "The Bridge at Trinquetaille," an Arles painting that was not nearly so typical of van Gogh's style—a rather "difficult" picture, in fact, without the lush color or the emotional appeal of "Sunflowers"—went for slightly more than twenty million at Christie's, to an unidentified collector living in Switzerland. Clearly, a new and spectacular price level had been established, at least for paintings by Vincent van Gogh.

Why was van Gogh worth so much? No one could claim that he was the best or the most important artist of his time, and rarity certainly was not a factor; a great many van Goghs remained in private hands—as the Metropolitan's 1984 "Van Gogh in Arles" exhibition had proved—and could come on the market at any time. Was there perhaps a link between van Gogh's sensibility and the zeitgeist, the spirit of the nineteen-eighties? His paintings had directly influenced the development of German Expressionism in the years before and after the First World War, and now the art world was once again awash in (neo-) Expressionist painting. But a zeitgeist does not cause someone to pay forty million dollars for a painting. David Nash could see no logical explanation. He doubted whether a major painting by Manet, Degas, or any of van Gogh's other famous contemporaries would bring such prices. Maybe it was just a reflection of the lowest-common-denominator appeal (to new collectors) of the van Gogh "story"—the mad genius who cut off his ear. Whatever the reason, the cost of insuring paintings by van Gogh was now a lot higher. And, for this reason, "Irises," which had been on exhibition in the Metropolitan's "Van Gogh in Saint-Rémy and Auvers" show at the time of the "Sunflowers" sale, did not return to the Joan Whitney Payson Gallery of Art afterward. It went into a storage vault in a Portland bank. John Payson approached Sotheby's about putting it up for auction, and early last fall he announced the forthcoming sale.

There was no competitive offer from Christie's, because Payson never asked for one. He had intended to do so, but at the close of Sotheby's presentation, which included such inducements as a special hardbound catalogue for "Irises" alone, high-voltage publicity, and pre-sale exhibitions of the painting in Japan and Europe, John Marion had turned to Payson and said, "Of course, you get the hammer price"—meaning that there would be no seller's commission. Payson had said, "You've just saved me a quarter. Now I don't have to call Christie's."

Both Sotheby's and Christie's have found that exhibiting paintings, jewelry, and other expensive items in the home countries of likely purchasers tends to enhance the prices they bring at auction. The promotional tour of "Irises" covered seventeen thousand five hundred miles in four weeks and cost the firm an undisclosed amount of money. (Outside sources estimated it at close to half a million dollars.) Packed in a specially designed wooden

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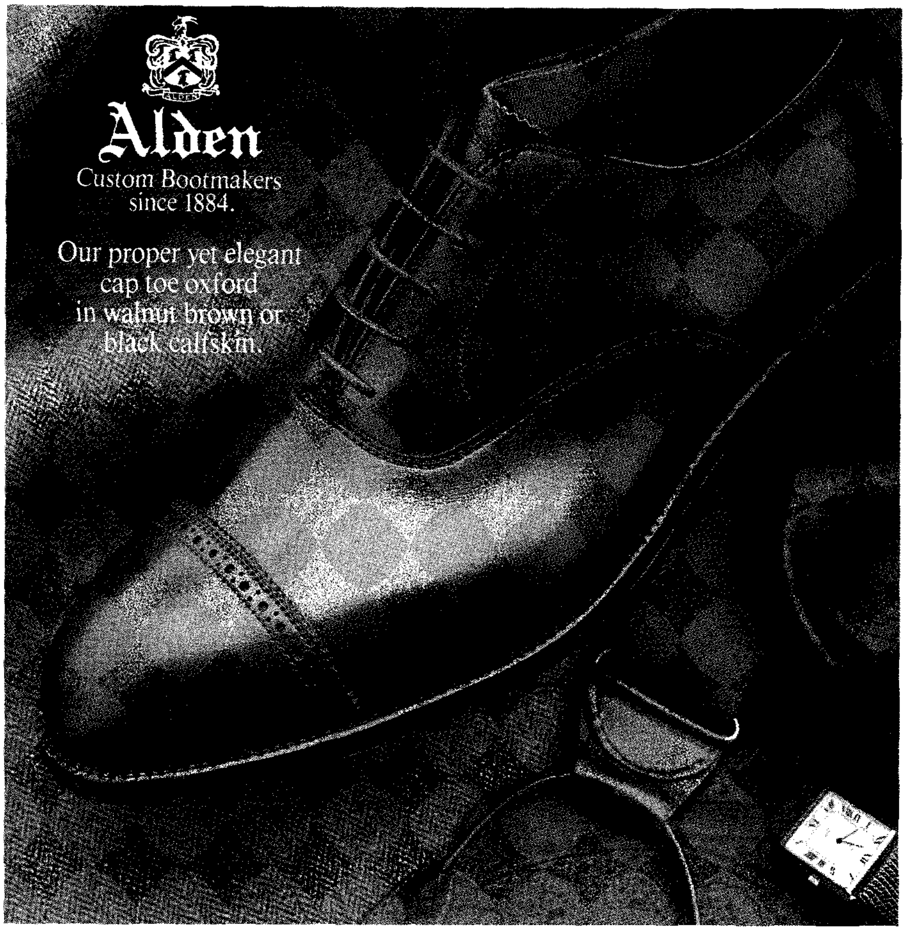
crate, watched over by armed guards, it went first to Tokyo, and was shown there to invited viewers in a small gallery that Sotheby's maintains in the Seibu department store. A much larger public flocked to see it in London, where it went on view in Sotheby's Bond Street gallery on October 19th, the day the New York stock market dropped five hundred and eight points. Then on to Geneva and Zurich (the home of the unidentified purchaser of "The Bridge at Trinquetaille") before its return to an impregnable room on the third floor of Sotheby's in New York.

Sotheby's, meanwhile, had mounted a major publicity campaign around the sale. Diana Levitt, the firm's public-relations director, fielded countless questions from journalists doing feature stories, and directed their attention to the opinions of experts such as John Rewald, the reigning scholarly authority on Impressionism and Post-Impressionism, who had said, "If a museum could have one painting by van Gogh, *that's* what it should get." Rewald described the coloration of "Irises" as "an incredible tour de force," and said that "Irises" was a better picture than "Sunflowers." David Nash and his colleagues spoke often of its marvellous state of preservation; the colors had not faded, Nash said, and the effect was as fresh and vivid as it had been when van Gogh painted it. "Irises" had been relined once, about thirty years ago (that is, the paint layer had been transferred to a new canvas), but the job had been done very skillfully and there had been little flattening of the surface texture.

The trouble was, neither Nash nor anyone else at Sotheby's had a clue regarding potential bidders. Usually, Nash has a pretty good idea who will be going after an important lot. He knew who was interested in a Juan Gris painting from the estate of Ernest Hemingway that was in the same sale, and he knew who was probably going to bid on Monet's "Flower Garden." But a week before the sale, which was scheduled for the evening of November 11th last year, no one had revealed a serious interest in bidding on "Irises." There was a lot of anxiety about the stock-market crash a month earlier. Several other Sotheby's sales during the week preceding November 11th had done well—extremely well, in fact—but they had not involved lots estimated at twenty million to thirty-nine million dollars, which was Nash's highly elastic guess on "Irises." No-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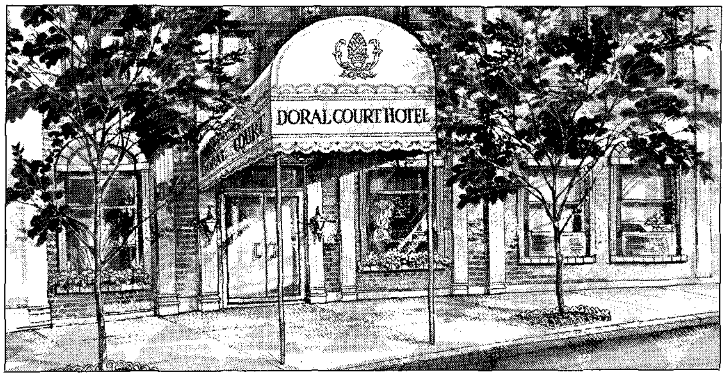

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body really knew what to expect, and Nash, Marion, and Payson, among others, grew increasingly nervous. The Nashes, moreover, were expecting their first child at any moment. Lucy's contemporary sale on November 4th had gone very well—there were no signs of slump in that market—but the possibility that her baby might be born on November 11th was on everyone's mind.

On Monday morning, November 9th, the people at Sotheby's all seemed to be in some sort of rapid motion. Diana Levitt said there had never been such a demand for tickets. (Sotheby's does not charge an admission fee, but to attend a major sale you must have a ticket.) According to Nash, "People are having their bankers call us to say that their client can spend thirty million if he can just get a seat." Several important buyers had expressed interest in "Irises" by this time. One of them had told Marion that he did not want to enter the bidding until the last possible moment—when it had come down to a single bidder. (By the time that happened on November 11th, the bidding was far beyond his limit.) Sotheby's gave a number of small lunch parties in its boardroom for collectors and friends, who were taken in after lunch to see the painting. Nash was constantly under pressure to arrange special viewings.

Shigeki Kameyama appeared in Nash's office at least once a day. A compact, muscular-looking man with a bullet head and an explosive laugh, he discussed at length, through an attractive new translator, various strategies by which he might finance the purchase of "Irises." He was interested in several other works in the Impressionist sale as well. He had bought three pictures at Christie's contemporary sale the week before (but none at Sotheby's contemporary sale), and as the Impressionist-and-modern sale drew closer he became more and more excitable. On Saturday, Kameyama had insisted that Nash come shopping with him, to buy a present for the impending new Nash. They went to Fusen-Usagi, a Japanese-owned store on Madison Avenue, where, over Nash's embarrassed protests, Kameyama bought the most expensive pram in the shop, filled it with infant garments and supplies, and paid for it all in cash, which he dredged out of a Gristede's shopping bag by the handful.

A huge number of people came to the reception at Sotheby's on the evening of November 9th, when the works of art in the Impressionist-and-modern sale went on view, in the second-floor galleries. "Irises" hung in the place of honor at the end of the main aisle, behind a velvet rope and flanked by two armed guards. The deep blues and strong greens looked more radiant than ever; Sotheby's had done nothing to the picture, not even a light cleaning, but it looked much fresher than anything else in the room. The following evening, it was moved to a wall of the third-floor gallery, where Sotheby's was giving a dinner party for the Payson family and their close friends. Payson made a speech in which he talked about what the painting had meant to him, and described his feelings on parting with it. Then John Marion got up and gave Payson an award consisting of a large plaque with a broken table leg attached to it—a reference to something that had happened on the day of the press conference back in September, when photographers asked Payson to sit on a long table. As he did so, the table collapsed, burying him in an avalanche of paper cups and coffee cake.

The weather turned nasty on the night of the sale. A mixture of cold rain and wet snow pelted the ticket holders, many of whom arrived in stretch limousines that backed up in front of the York Avenue entrance and delayed traffic for blocks in either direction. Sotheby's usually makes its patrons check their coats and umbrellas before going upstairs to the salesroom, but not that night. More than a thousand people had tickets to the main salesroom, including several hundred standees, and some eight hundred more watched the proceedings over closed-circuit television in adjoining rooms. The press, confined to an aisle on the far side of the main room, was a highly visible presence; at least twenty television cameras were focussed on the stage, where Nash and other Sotheby's executives, the men in black tie and the women in dinner dresses, stood by to take calls on telephone lines set up for clients bidding from other cities or other continents. The rows of ballroom chairs were placed so close together that it was impossible for anyone to get in or out without stepping on someone's feet, and the ticket holders took a long time

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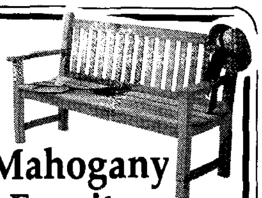

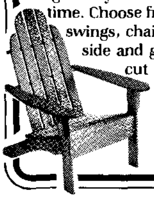

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to be seated. A lot of visiting was done in the aisles. The art world is still like a village in some respects, and most of its better-known citizens were there, along with the usual smattering of film stars and other celebrities. The sale was scheduled to start at seven o'clock, but it was seven-thirty before John Marion, looking wonderfully genial, mounted the podium and called the first lot.

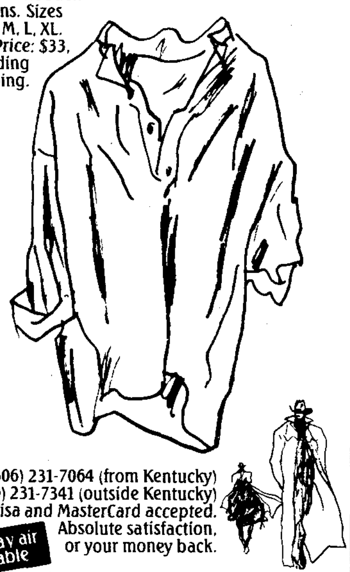
There were few surprises in the early bidding: prices conformed fairly closely to pre-sale estimates. A Monet still-life, "Dahlias," went to a Japanese buyer for five hundred and forty thousand dollars, well above the high estimate, but a beautiful small Cézanne consigned by the Art Institute of Chicago failed to meet its very high reserve price (too high, according to Nash) and was bought in. The level of excitement in the room rose perceptibly after Lot 24, Renoir's "Tête de Jeune Fille," went to another Japanese for two million three hundred thousand dollars. Lot 25 was "Irises." Nash likes to have the most important work put up about a third of the way through a sale, on the theory that the people who bid on it but fail to get it may then spend their money on something else. Nash still did not know who would be bidding on "Irises." Several clients had expressed interest, but they had all been cagey about it. Mountain Tortoise had become increasingly keyed up about the picture in the days preceding the sale. At the end of a long session in Nash's office on November 10th, he had told Nash he was so fixed on "Irises" that everything else had become a blur to him, and because of that he thought perhaps he shouldn't come to the sale. This cryptic remark hung in Nash's mind as he stood on the narrow stage scanning the rows of seats. Mr. Kameyama, he saw, was not there.

A low, appreciative murmur went around the room as Lot 25 appeared on the revolving display stand. Marion let a few moments pass before he said, in a conversational tone, "Who'll say fifteen million to start it?" and then, "I have a bid of fifteen million."

The bidding went slowly at first. It was all on the telephones at the front of the room—there were no bids from the floor. Marion had to repeat the same bid several times as he moved up, in million-dollar increments, to twenty-five million. Sitting with members of his family in the boardroom, overlooking the main room, John Payson felt a stab of anxiety. "I had a sinking feeling," he said afterward. "Oh, my God, I thought, maybe it's not going to go." He had set his hopes on the picture's achieving a price of somewhere between thirty-two and thirty-four million.

At thirty-one million, the pace quickened. Only two bidders were left—there had been four at the start—and both were determined. David Nash, on the telephone to one of them, would make a little bow in Marion's direction to indicate each million-dollar increase by his client, and a few moments later Geraldine Nager, a Sotheby's customer-service representative, who was to the right of Nash on the stage, would signal her client's rival bid. The audience broke into a brief round of applause when the bidding passed forty million, breaking the record for "Sunflowers." The duel continued without a pause to forty-eight million. Nash made his little bow to signal forty-nine million. There was a moment of silence, and then Marion's gavel cracked down on the podium. "Sold," he said, "for forty-nine million dollars." The room erupted in prolonged applause and cheering.

The rest of the sale went well but not spectacularly well, with a good many pictures going for close to their high estimates. Thanks to "Irises," though, Marion was able to announce at the press conference immediately following the sale that the total amount spent that evening was a hundred and ten million twenty-two thousand dollars—a new auction record for a single sale. Marion was not able, however, to reveal the name of either the new owner of "Irises" or the underbidder; all he could say was that the picture had been bought by a European agent, acting for an "overseas buyer." With the buyer's premium, the painting had cost him (or her) fifty-three million nine hundred thousand dollars. While reporters shouted questions at Marion, Nash, and John Payson—he had come up on the stage looking very happy and holding a purple iris—the turntable revolved and "Irises" appeared once again for the press, with a security guard standing beside it. Not many people seemed to be looking at it. After about ten minutes, the turntable revolved again and the picture was gone.



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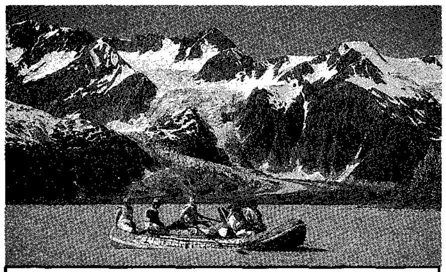

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In the days and weeks that followed, the mystery surrounding the new owner of "Irises" remained impenetrable. Art-world news and gossip travels with the speed of light, and there were many rumors: the picture was en route to Australia, to Japan, to South America, or to Brunei. A few insiders were convinced that Kameyama had bought it, using a European agent to throw everyone off the scent. (He had always bid for himself before.) Nash was quite sure that the buyer was not Kameyama. He had a very good idea who it was, but his lips were sealed, and, in any event, he was fully occupied with other concerns; Josephine Clare Nash was born on November 14th.

Sotheby's shipping department had sent "Irises," in its double-layer wooden case, to the European address specified by the agent who had been bidding on the telephone through Nash, and nobody could find out more than that. Such things happened. Another van Gogh, "Les Cyprès et l'Arbre en Fleurs," consigned by the William W. Crocker family, of San Francisco, had been sold at Parke-Bernet in 1970 for a million three hundred thousand dollars (a huge price at the time; it was the first van Gogh to bring more than a million dollars at auction); the buyer was not identified, and the picture had not been seen or heard of since then. As time went on, it became increasingly clear that nobody was going to see "Irises" for a long time, either. A painting that had become difficult to see because of the speculative excitement surrounding it had now become invisible. All that remained of van Gogh's "Irises" was the reiteration of its record price.

LETTER from Vincent to Theo, Auvers, early June, 1890: "I think that all the talk of high prices paid for Millets, etc., lately has made the chances of merely getting back one's painting expenses even worse. It is enough to make you dizzy. So why think about it?—it would only daze our minds. Better perhaps to seek a little friendship and to live from day to day." —Calvin Tomkins

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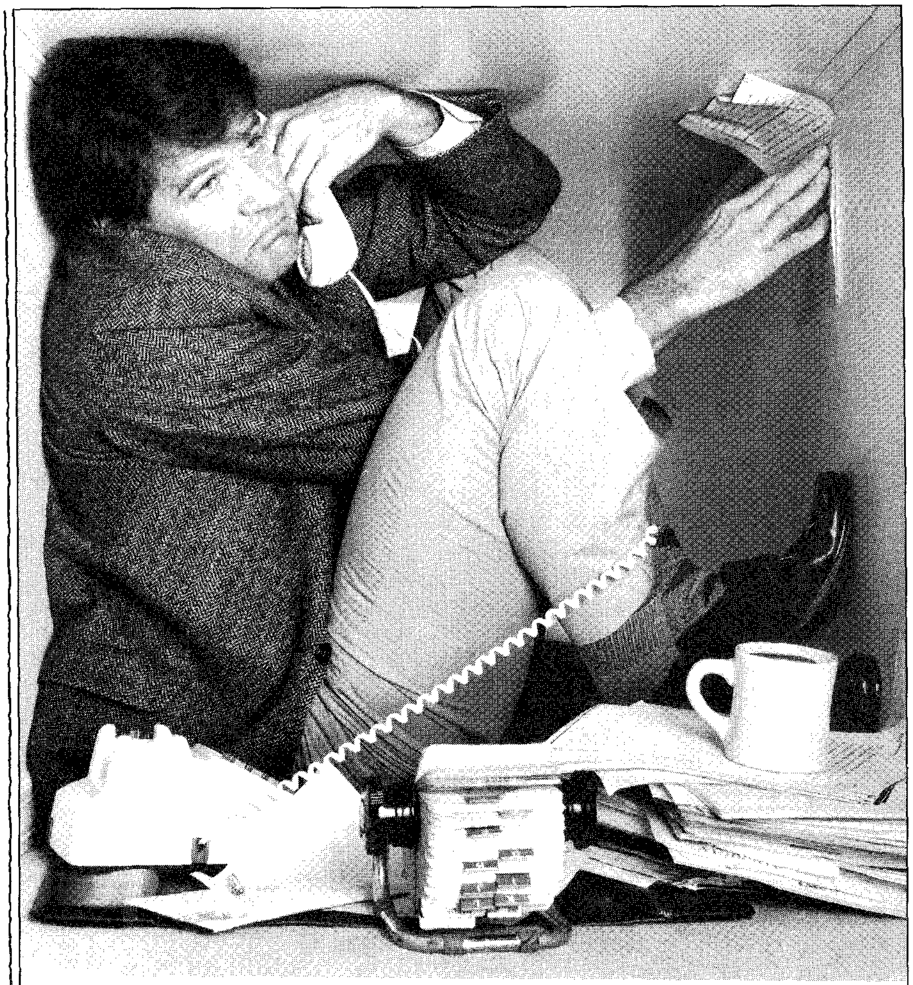

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THE CURRENT CINEMA

Soft Light and Hellfire

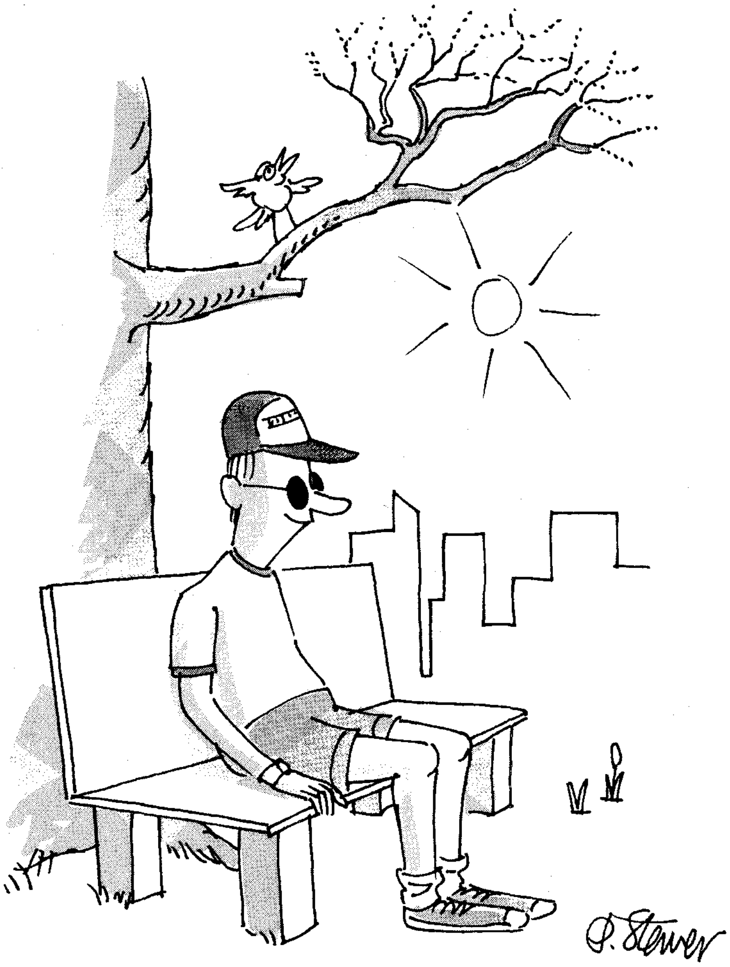
THE melting beauty of Clare Peploe's "High Season" has a lot to do with a great cinematographer, Chris Menges, and a great setting, a town on the Greek island of Rhodes. There's bliss in the soft light and the acropolis, on its hilltop, and the color of the sea. But the film's seductiveness has even more to do with Peploe's knowing how to frame the shots and then edit them so that the images move just a little faster than you expect. She's always a nuance ahead of you, her wit rippling over the story of the nine principal characters—some of them English, some of them Greek, and one Greek-American. The script, which she wrote with her brother Mark, is a comedy about the type of colonization of undeveloped areas known as tourism: vacationers from prosperous countries taking over the most spectacular scenery at the most desirable times of the year. "High Season" is a high-style, art-house comedy, elegantly calibrated, like the French-Canadian "Decline of the American Empire" but giddier and with more bravura.

Jacqueline Bisset has the pivotal role. She's Katherine, an English photographer who, with her sculptor husband, Patrick (James Fox), came to live in the coastal town long before the tourists discovered it. Their thirteen-year-old daughter, Chloe (Ruby Baker), has grown up here, and even though Katherine and Patrick have separated they have both stayed on, he supporting himself by turning out fashionably modern pieces that she thinks contemptible, and she publishing books of photographs featuring Greek antiquities and peasant life—photographs that he regards as fuddy-duddy endeavors. Her latest book isn't selling, and she's broke. She's going to have to give up her house and leave this island she loves unless she can get a buyer for a vase that was given to her many years earlier by a famous, now elderly art historian, Basil Sharp (Sebastian Shaw), a dear friend who adores her, and who arrives for a visit.

Jacqueline Bisset has generally (and justly) been remarked on more for her lusciousness than for her acting talent, but this is her juiciest performance. Her Katherine is a warm, breathing object of art. Of course, old Sharpie would adore her; the audience does, too—especially when she's in the moonlit water, tipsy, and confused about who the young man is that she's making love with.

Sharpie appears to be in his early seventies, but Sebastian Shaw was born in 1905; he was a handsome leading man in British films of the thirties and forties (more recently, he played the dying Darth Vader in "Return of the Jedi"), and he's still handsome. His face opens to the sunlight and the camera. He's a scenic wonder, like Bisset, and like Irene Papas, who plays Katherine's widowed friend—tough, weather-beaten Penelope. She's as much a part of the magnificence of the island as the honking donkeys. Penelope, who mythologizes everything, talks about her long-dead husband as if he were the Colossus of Rhodes. She regards the tourists as enemies—as an army of occupation, like the Nazis—and she's engaged in a constant battle with her son, Yanni (Paris Tselios), who doesn't mind smiling for the enemies—he wants the prosperity they bring. This is one of those happy occasions when the strong-voiced Papas, who has embodied so many of the tragic heroines of Greek mythology, gets a chance to play comedy, and she exults in it. (Her deeply goofy Penelope is like Katina Paxinou stood on her head.) The whole movie is superbly cast. The wizardly young Kenneth Branagh plays Rick, the practical-minded Englishman who fixes Katherine's toilet so that it finally flushes with a real whoosh—a service that gives her such wholesouled delight that she begins to kiss him passionately. (Rick responds like a Shakespearean fool: he's instantly—ludicrously—smitten.) Meanwhile, Rick's wife, Carol (Lesley Manville), who is a romantic and has just discovered Byron's poetry, keeps herself occupied with the tourist-loving Yanni. The group is completed by Robert Stephens as Konstantinis, an obscenely rich Greek-American, who's eager to buy Katherine's vase but needs Sharpie to declare it a fake, so that he can take it out of the country.

Movies about artists generally turn awed and overadmiring, and when there's talk about art it can be archly inside and gossipy. "High Season" doesn't fall into these standard traps—probably because Katherine and Patrick are mediocre artists. (Each recognizes the other's deficiencies—



SPRING TRAINING

that's why they can't live together.) But they appreciate beauty; they love the island and respect the Greeks and their customs. Is "High Season" saying that Katherine is spiritually different from the tourists—a flashy breed, who want the undeveloped area to offer them the comforts and entertainments they're used to, and who will inevitably change the way the villagers live? Yes, she's different. The movie centers on her efforts to sell the vase so she can go on living in this place as it is. Patrick puts her down for her conventionality as a photographer, but the movie doesn't. It adores her for the passion of her surrender to the island. (At the same time, the director recognizes that the spoiler tourists help to keep the islanders alive.) "High Season" has a nifty and ingenious plot, but what makes it so satisfying is its empathy with expatriate life. Katherine and Patrick don't have to be great artists to justify living on a Greek island. There's a generosity of spirit in this movie. You feel it in the way each character is treated. And there's enough irony mixed in with the generosity to keep everything buoyant.

This is more than an accomplished first feature; it has some of the yumminess of a picture like "Shampoo"—for example, in the scene where Katherine goes to Patrick's place, wakes him, and asks if he loves her, while ignoring the girl tourist lying next to him. And it has easygoing visual jokes, like the way the camera pans from left to right during the opening titles and then back. (The movie never leaves the island.) And there's a joke about the future being behind you: Katherine's daughter, Chloe, cites an illustration (when you're standing the wrong way on an escalator), and at the end the movie shows Sharpie going backward into the future. Clare Peploe had previously made only the half-hour short "Couples and Robbers," but she has been talking, working on, and living movies for a couple of decades. She was one of the screenwriters on Antonioni's "Zabriskie Point" (1970), and was one of the writers and an assistant director as well on Bertolucci's "Luna" (1979). She's married to Bertolucci, and her brother Mark, who wrote "The Passenger" for Antonioni and has collaborated with about a dozen directors, also wrote (with Bertolucci) the script of "The Last Emperor." This début film isn't major or innovative. (And it has rough spots: Patrick's sculpture is perhaps cruddier than necessary, and there's a not too well-informed speech about Communists in the thirties as the only ones who organized against the Nazis.) But it has a lovely equilibrium.

Goats and dogs and donkeys move in and out of the frame. In one scene, Penelope sits under a tree looking at Katherine's book and a goat trots into the background—you want to applaud. That wandering goat represents what Penelope wants to preserve. It's the free spirit of the place. And this first-time director has had the wit to use random donkey honks on the soundtrack as an ancient form of aleatory music.

SET in an Ozark community, "Pass the Ammo" is a piece of rollicky backwoods Americana. This lampoon of television evangelists was shot in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, where the civic auditorium was converted into the studios of the Tower of Bethlehem, a ministry that lays claim to an audience of twenty million people and is systematically bilking them. The story is about a young woman (Linda Kozlowski) from the hill country who's trying to recover fifty thousand dollars that her family was stung for. Her fiancé (Bill Paxton) organizes what's meant to be a small, quiet robbery of the Tower's counting room but finds himself holding the congregation of a couple of thousand people hostage, and on satellite TV. He's an impetuous fellow, and at first he's full of vim—he rather enjoys seeing himself on the box. But the movie doesn't give him any clear negotiating position: he doesn't formulate what he wants for the hostages—he doesn't even tell the TV viewers how the family was bamboozled. The main characters inside and outside the tabernacle seem to be stalled, waiting for what's going to happen next, and you feel that the picture doesn't have a through line. It turns out that it does—that the writers, Neil Cohen and Joel Cohen (not the Coens, and not brothers), have worked a logic into their ruckus. Yet something in the directing, by David Beaird, or perhaps in the editing, gets straggly. "Pass the Ammo" isn't as much of a wingding as "Used Cars" (1980)—it doesn't have the hot-ziggety inventiveness—but it's of that screwball-satire genre. And it has a whole slew of terrifically

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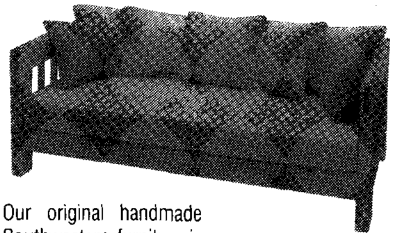

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talented actors—the kind of actors who should (but don't) get the big roles in big pictures.

Tim Curry, with his devil's incisors, is the charismatic Reverend Ray Porter. At the opening of the film, he preaches a television sermon while standing against a nighttime background of the solar system—a special effect provided by the technological freako who runs the control room. Curry floats against the star-studded blackness, the bags under his eyes puffing out and his curly, dimply smile so elfishly dirty that it's as if he were lighted by hellfire. Perhaps the more fertile psychological subject is self-deceiving evangelists, but in farce what's wanted is exaggeration, not psychology—Reverend Ray is a bratty con artist. Boyish, with tousled hair on his forehead, he revels in snookering the public and dallies with the ladies of the choir. (They wear large white wings.) There has never been enough of Tim Curry onscreen, so it's too bad that his role diminishes as "Pass the Ammo" gets under way, but when he's around, you can see why the choirgirls practically cross themselves at the sight of him.

Ray Porter's exhibitionist wife, Darla, who stars in the big musical extravaganzas of the "Tower of Bethlehem Hour," is played by Annie Potts, who has a figure worth exhibiting. Dressed in tight, spangled satin, she wiggles like the best cootch dancer in Heaven while delivering a sales pitch for expensive Bibles. And when she appears as Delilah, opposite the Sampson of a born-again football player (Brian Thompson), her bare midriff moves spasmodically. The song "Lay Your Money Down for Jesus," performed by baritone twins (John and Paul Cody) in Las Vegas-cowboy outfits, tells us we're hearing Reverend Ray's message, but when we watch Darla writhing through the cloud effects of "You're in Paradise Now" we know that yes she is. She lives in a cloudy world of her own; when she's showing her body, and her eyes promise erotic delights, she's at her most religious.

Anthony Geary is Stonewall, the genius of the control room, who uses the circuitry as if it were part of him. Since Stonewall can control what the outside world sees during the robbery, this quiet pothead with leftover hippie hair is the one who gets the chance to play God. Geary acts the role very close in, with his eyes furtively registering everything. His is the tiniest of

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comic styles; it's barely visible, yet it makes you laugh. The team of robbers includes the hill-country woman's two hick, ex-con cousins. Glenn Withrow plays the small, perky one, who isn't fazed when the robbery expands to taking thousands of hostages, because it gives him the chance to meet the choirgirls, and this little snookums connects with one of the most sumptuous of the winged angels. The other cousin, played by Dennis Burkley, is a cagey three-hundred-pound giant, who insures himself against future police harassment by singing a tribute to cops and their hard lives—"You're a Policeman." (Darla accompanies him on the organ.) The song goes over the Tower's TV system, and the cops are deeply touched. They're outside, along with irate officials, the National Guard, and crowds of townspeople, and all these groups are so eager to shoot the four invaders who they believe are desecrating the Tower that they're ready to fire indiscriminately. The only person trying to keep order is a smart, hard-bitten Cajun—the local sheriff, played by Leland Crooke. He defies the governor, who was put in office by the high-muck-a-mucks of the ministry. (One mucker, played by Richard Paul, is a ringer for Jerry Falwell.)

You'll probably wish there were more of Ray and Darla snarling at each other, and wish their recriminations had more effect on the TV audience. And you'll probably want the action scenes to have more clarity; the climax—an orgiastic fireworks scene—has us worried for too long about the characters caught in it. But what's there has a klunky freshness; it hasn't been pawed over. The actors don't look rehearsed to death. And, luckily, Bill Paxton has the vitality of a star. He has triumphed in potent, rough-guy parts and, most recently, as the flamboyant wild man in "Near Dark." Here he's the character who initiates the folly but has a core of sanity. He's clear-faced and white-shirted, like a proper hero, yet he's as spontaneous as ever. This actor knows how to show ardor; he's a real sparkplug.

—PAULINE KAEL

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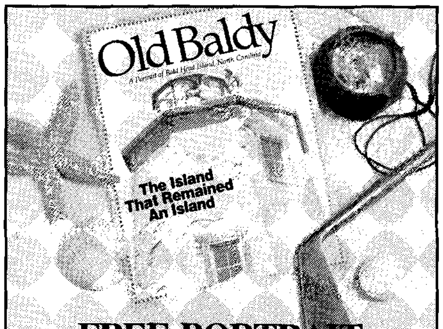

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THE THEATRE

Poor Butterfly

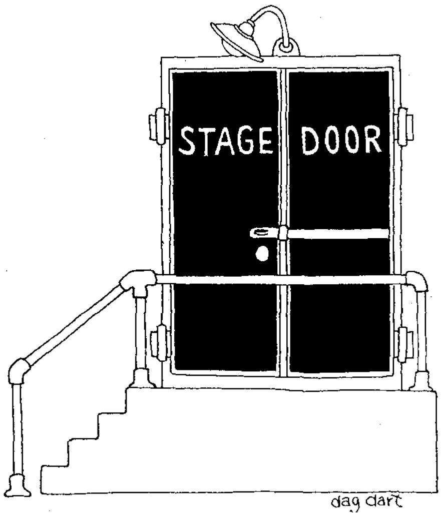
OF all the young dramatists at work in America today, none is more audacious, imaginative, or gifted than David Henry Hwang, whose "M. Butterfly" opened last week at the Eugene O'Neill. The play is based on an actual episode: in 1964, a French diplomat stationed in Beijing took as his mistress a star of the Beijing Opera, and only after they had been together for many years—when both of them were arrested in Paris and charged with being spies for Communist China—did he find out that "she" was actually a man. The story broke in the newspapers in 1986, and Mr. Hwang knew at once that it was made to order for his own ironic cast of mind. From the beginning of his career, the underlying theme of his plays has been the elusive, enduring power of the Asian spirit vis-à-vis the West, and so it is here. When his first play, "FOB," opened Off Broadway in 1980, I described it as "funny, mysterious, and often beautiful;" "M. Butterfly" is funny, mysterious, and often beautiful in its arresting production on Broadway. The diplomat, called Gallimard, is given a fine portrayal by John Lithgow, and he doubles as narrator as the play moves back and forth in time and place, and red lacquer screens move back and forth across the stage. Gallimard tells us of his awkwardness as a schoolboy at his lycée and of his difficulties with women as a young man, and we then see scenes of his marriage and scenes with his boss at the consulate in Beijing. He also tells the story of Puccini's "Madama Butterfly," as Cio-Cio-San moves down a ramp that curves from upstage to downstage center, and, in time, they lip-synch a duet from the opera. Puccini's score pervades the play. The diplomat and the singer meet, and the progress to the affair begins, with the playwright discoursing on the subtleties of Oriental sexuality and of transvestism, and we find out exactly how the hoax was perpetrated. B. D. Wong, as Monsieur Butterfly, is also remarkable, and particularly when before our eyes he strips off his female drag and gets into Army uniform, changing sex and character in the doing. The action throughout combines, sometimes blends, realism and ritual. I note—and not for the first time in reviewing Mr. Hwang—that it is almost impossible to indicate in synopsis the richness and resourcefulness of his plays and the steadiness of his complex plots. He seems as familiar with his ancestral customs and sensibilities as he is with his Western ones, but his satiric eye and his glorious humor are all his own. And he inspires confidence in the audience every step of the way.

The acting of the company is worthy of the play. Mr. Lithgow can surely never have been better than he is in the role of the amorous dupe, as much a victim of his lack of sexual confidence as he is of love; Mr. Wong is, as I say, exactly right; Lori Tan Chinn, tripling as Butterfly's maid and dresser and his bossy, peremptory comrade in arms, is funny and credible; Rose Gregorio is Gallimard's calm, patient, somewhat baffled wife; and George N. Martin is the consul in Beijing, among other characters. As for the production as a whole, I wondered at times if it wasn't too elaborate—the script itself is so theatrical it would probably play on a bare stage—but I'm not sure; it is certainly effective. Lucia Hwong (along with Puccini) has composed a score that is a blend of Chinese and modern Western music. Eiko Ishioka designed those handsome red lacquer screens and that swooping ramp, as well as the costumes; the lighting was by Andy Phillips. John Dexter directed.

—EDITH OLIVER

Say Catharsis, Somebody

"OEDIPUS AT COLONUS" was Sophocles' last play, his love song to Periclean Athens. Written in the closing years of the fifth century B.C., when Athens was losing the Peloponnesian War, it comes after "Oedipus the King" in the chronology of the Oedipus story, and before "Antigone." According to David Grene, who co-edited the University of Chicago series that now publishes Robert Fitzgerald's translation of the play—the one used in "The Gospel at Colonus," currently being revived at the Lunt-Fontanne Theatre—"Antigone" was first produced around 441 B.C., "Oedipus the King" some fifteen years later, and "Oedipus at Colonus," posthumously, in 404, the year after the destruction of the Athenian fleet at Aegospotami.



The action of the play revolves around an oracle's pronouncement that whatever city Oedipus chooses for his final resting place shall be blessed—divinely protected. When the play opens, news of this prophecy has got around, so that, after many years of wandering with only Antigone (and occasionally her sister, Ismene) to guide and comfort him, the old, blind beggar Oedipus, arriving at Colonus, outside Athens, finds himself suddenly very much sought after. Creon, the King of Thebes, wants him because the city is under attack by Polynices, Oedipus' son; Polynices needs him for victory in the coming battle with Eteocles, his brother.

There is no moral position stronger than to be suddenly wanted by those who have treated you badly, and the expression of righteous anger was Sophocles' forte. "Oedipus at Colonus" provides a real field day for moral-indignation buffs: it gives Oedipus a chance to vent his spleen on just about everyone who has ever given him a hard time—from an officious stranger to smug Creon, lording it over the House of Labdacus for all those years, and his own son Polynices, who, with his brother, had left reverence and filial piety to the girls. Oedipus tells them all exactly where they get off. The play is full of great speeches and confrontations, great rage and bitterness: Sophocles was having trouble with his own sons, who had hauled him into court on a charge of mental incompetence, hoping to gain control of his land. But he himself was old now, thinking an old man's thoughts, and the play also contains some of the most beautiful choral odes in tragedy: the meditation on age, death, and suffering ("Though he has watched a decent age pass by, A man will sometimes still desire the world"), and—even lovelier—the hymn to Athens and Attica ("The land beloved of horsemen, fair Colonus takes a guest"). Colonus was Sophocles' home town, and it was the recitation of this newly penned ode before his judges that is said to have won him unanimous acquittal.

The production at the Lunt-Fontanne is essentially the same one that was seen by audiences at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in 1983 and was broadcast on PBS in 1985. Isabell Monk plays Antigone, as she did in the original production, and Morgan Freeman narrates the role of Oedipus, in the person of a Pentecostal preacher—for, as everyone will by now have heard, the show takes certain liberties with the play. Conceived and directed by Lee Breuer, with music by Bob Telson, "The Gospel at Colonus" is Sophocles' play recast as a black gospel service. Each of the roles is both spoken and sung, narrated and acted out—in most cases, by more than one person. Thus, Oedipus' part in the story is sometimes told by Mr. Freeman and sometimes sung by Clarence Fountain backed up by the Five Blind Boys of Alabama. Occasionally, J. J. Farley and his blue-suited Soul Stirrers attend the five white-suited Blind Boys like a private chorus. Robert Earl Jones plays Creon wearing a mobster's white overcoat; Kevin Davis, full of sullen anger and bitterness, plays Polynices dressed largely in leather; the "Ode to Man" from "Antigone" is sung by the J. D. Steele Singers; Rev. Earl F. Miller performs the messenger speech like a call-and-response sermon; and Martin Jacox acts as Choragos, wailing on an electric guitar. Meanwhile, a full gospel choir, ebulliently led by J. D. Steele, and seated throughout on the scaffolding of Alison Yerxa's set, performs Mr. Telson's gospel settings for the choral odes, occasionally crying out responses as Mr. Freeman reads from what he calls "The Book of Oedipus."

The idea of superimposing Christian values on "Oedipus at Colonus" is both clever and problematic. Lee Breuer is not the first to notice the presence in the play of certain proto-Christian themes: sin and salvation, suffering and redemption, expiation and a spirit of divine grace that blows where it lists. Some of what is heard or seen toward the end of the play might even remind one of resurrection, rebirth, and life everlasting. Still, the only thing promised "for all time to come" is divine protection for Athens, and it is contingent on Oedipus' being dead: his bones have to be lying there in Athenian soil.

What happens at the end of "Oedipus at Colonus" and what sort of godhead, if any, Oedipus has been accorded are subjects of scholarly debate, but the Breuer version is unequivocal. At the end of the evening, Mr. Freeman, vocally accompanied by Mr. Fountain and the Five Blind Boys, and by much sobbing and lamentation, makes his way ceremoniously up a flight of stairs toward a doorway gleaming with dry-ice mystery and light. And when he does it's a dead cert that no one at the Lunt-Fontanne is thinking of the House of Labdacus.

"The Gospel at Colonus" is probably at its best on the symbolic level—where characters onstage become archetypal figures, embodying certain passions and predicaments. It's the level at which theatre becomes an occasion for hearing great poetry beautifully rendered. Listening to the rise and fall of Morgan Freeman's voice as he recites a choral ode, listening to Isabell Monk's cadences and watching the shades of abstract virtues that cross her face—patience, devotion, generosity—you find yourself wondering what it would be like to see them perform Shakespeare, and, in wondering this, realize that a lack of music and oratory in the schooling of white American speech must account for half our inadequacy in performing the classics. The other half can be put down to the inability of so many Method actors to project anything other than feeling. Monk and Freeman know how to do more than emote, can actually hold an audience spellbound in the grip of someone else's words. The style of the production, too—mixing drama and narrative—is useful in suggesting, if not how tragedy was performed in the fifth century, at least something about how it may have been received. The chorus that spoke in the voice of one but had the body of many was there, after all, to get caught up in the drama *and* help tell the story. Even the device of having Oedipus played by seven men has the effect of emphasizing his magnitude and universality. And, of course, there's the music—more witty than stirring in the first half, and more stirring than funny in the second, though there's humor on both sides of the interval.

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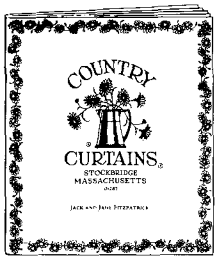

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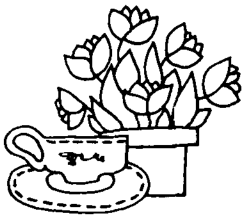

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fails is at the axis at which theatre is supposed to make us care about the commerce between specific individuals. "Oedipus at Colonus" presents a great cast of characters, all of whom have a good deal to say (most of it of a very complex nature) about the fate of Oedipus. The text presented at the Lunt-Fontanne is cut to shreds: it's "Oedipus at Colonus" with most of the dialogue left out, lines, odes, and speeches reassigned and transposed—sometimes from other plays—and only enough bits of the long speeches left in for the story to hold its shape. Not once in the course of the evening are we stirred by a confrontation: at times, the figures that pace the stage might be almost anyone.

Lee Breuer's version of "Oedipus at Colonus" conveys neither the moral issues at stake in the situation that the play proposes nor anything of its drama. But so what? "The Gospel at Colonus" isn't about theatre or the values of fifth-century Athens; it's about American values—specifically, black culture and black music. Moreover, there is a sense in which Sophocles' play isn't really about Oedipus, either, a point at which its hero stops being simply Oedipus and becomes Athens at the end of the Peloponnesian War: like Oedipus, tired and beleaguered, ragged and set upon from all sides, an unwilling suppliant of her moral inferiors. To Athenians watching the play in the twilight of the Periclean era, Oedipus the achiever, the self-made king and solver of incomprehensible riddles, must have represented all the Athenian virtues. Just as it is possible for a contemporary audience to feel touched by Oedipus, if not for his own sake, then for that of the ghost of Athens, it ought to be possible for a purist to be moved by "The Gospel at Colonus." The tradition of gospel music and the values it upholds—the importance of church and family—are as threatened today as war-torn Athens was. Athens held out until the very last moment: even after that decisive naval disaster, she endured siege and famine, fighting on like one of Sophocles' stubborn heroes, and didn't surrender until 404, the year after Sophocles died. In equating blind Oedipus with the black musician trying to make his way in a predominantly white world, in moving us all to stomp and clap, "The Gospel at Colonus" may not promote an understanding of Sophocles but it keeps faith in spirit with the culture that produced him.

—Mimi Kramer

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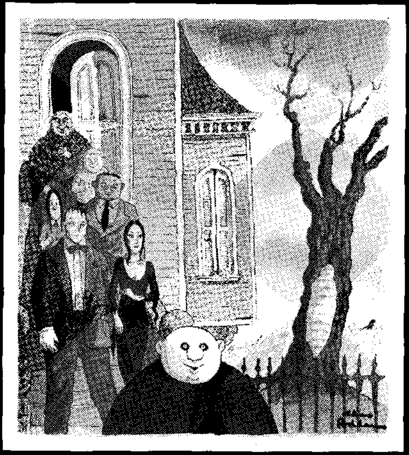

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LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

MARCH 24

As of now, the question of who will govern over the next, probably difficult four years has, in both parties, come down to matters of arithmetic and mechanics. It is considered all but settled that the Republican nomination will go to the candidate with the best-laid plans and the most money—and the Dukakis campaign is working hard to establish that that's the way it should be in the Democratic contest. As it became clear to Democrats, after the large round of contests on March 8th, that no candidate would be able to win a majority of the delegates through the primaries and caucuses—this was not unexpected—a great deal of maneuvering began, and the Dukakis campaign continued its psychological war of "inevitability." After the contest in Illinois last week, in which Dukakis came in a poor third—far behind Paul Simon and Jesse Jackson—and won no delegates, the question became whether any Democratic candidate would have even forty per cent of the delegates at the end of the contests, and be the clear front-runner. To do even this, Dukakis would have to win nearly seventy per cent of the remaining delegates. He is hoping to recoup in the Michigan caucuses to be held this coming Saturday, March 26th. (He won the Kansas caucuses last Saturday, and came in second to Jackson in Puerto Rico's popularity vote—the delegates remain uncommitted—on Sunday.) But there are several big contests to come, and the matter is far from settled. Oddly, many observers have expressed great perturbation at the fact that the Democrats didn't settle on a clear front-runner some weeks ago—but that's what the nomination contest is for.

The logic of "inevitability" is that whoever starts out best should automatically be the nominee. Nearly half the country's population hasn't had a chance to vote yet. (Thirty-two states, several of them small, have held contests.) Only one industrial state (Illinois) has been heard from, and neither of the two most populous states (New York and California) has voted. So what's the hurry? The apparent early end of the Republican race is an aberration. The only reason for having a long process is to see how a candidate holds up—to allow people to take another look. The Democratic caucuses coming up in Michigan this weekend may help sort things out further, but the turning point will come later—from mid-April to early May—when the voting will take place in some of the big states (New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio). At the same time, a large number of the group that may be decisive in the Democratic race—the "super-delegates"—will be chosen. Dukakis has already been relentlessly at work seeking the support of super-delegates and the endorsement of as many political figures as possible—and, for a variety of reasons, not all of them having to do with Dukakis, this is beginning to pay off.

Before Illinois, large theories were already developing around the fact that George Bush and Michael Dukakis were as of then seen as the most likely nominees: that this time the country is turning to competent doers—or what are seen as such—and away from ideological binges. It is becoming fashionable to say that given the fact that neither Bush nor Dukakis is very good at moving people, this will be the year of the bore. But, as is often the case in analyses of elections, fragments were being stretched to create a theory. As is usually the case in elections, the results are brought about by a number of factors—including, of course, who entered in the first place, what kinds of candidates they were, how they played off against each other, and how they divided the vote—and have little to do with the country sitting down and deciding what kind of President it wants. On the Republican side, Robert Dole is no less pragmatic than Bush—and neither of them would win awards for oratory. On the Democratic side, it is hard to imagine great substantive differences between Administrations of Michael Dukakis, Richard Gephardt, or Albert Gore. The fact that Gephardt and Gore are better speakers than Dukakis has no connection with whether they might lose out to him. Dukakis's "Mr. Goodwrench" approach to government is selling somewhat, but it isn't the only reason he may prevail. If he does prevail, it will also be in large part because he had the best campaign plan and the money to implement it and because of the flaws in his opponents' campaigns—and because many key Democrats want to avoid a prolonged nomination fight. It is the money and the planning that have propelled his rather thin message—essentially that he is for "good jobs at good wages." (For all the weakness of Dukakis's message, he has become much better at delivering it. His approach is cheerful and upbeat instead of angry: "The best America is not behind us; the best America is yet to come.") Albert Gore, who might possibly be a stronger nominee if he got a grip on his campaign and gave people more of a reason to follow him, may have started too late to become well enough known or a sufficiently devel-

Sissy Sheffield's Love Affair with Cinnamon Toast (She's an Animal) oped candidate to give Dukakis a fight for it in the later contests. Bush's uninspiring argument that he should be elected because he faithfully served Ronald Reagan and has held a number of other important jobs would not have propelled him forward without the daunting campaign machinery behind him, and without unintentional assistance from his chief opponent. Dole's on-again, off-again departure from the scene, his displays of inner turmoil, have been painful to behold. Dole has run a terrible campaign, and has shown characteristics that give even some of his backers pause. Both Dukakis and Bush, in fact, are offering muzzy messages to the voters, being highly unexplicit about what they plan to do if elected. It is probably no accident that the nomination contests, particularly on the Democratic side, are characterized by late decisions by the voters and—with the exception of Jesse Jackson's supporters—little enthusiasm for their choice.

THE mood among many elected Democrats and Party officials has gone through three evolutions in the last few weeks. The first, which began to take hold before March 8th, was one of quiet resignation. Not many of these people are very taken with Dukakis—his cool remoteness and lack of charm have long put off other politicians—but they figured that he was likely to be the nominee, and they wanted to avoid bloodshed. They are painfully aware that the Democrats have lost four out of the last five elections, and believe that prolonged bloodletting will give them no chance at all in November. They didn't—and for the most part still don't—see how any candidate in the field can stop Dukakis, given his long and deliberately planned head start and his plentiful resources, and they desperately want to avoid a chaotic Convention. Thus, while the mathematics of the situation before March 8th were that it was likely that at the end of the primaries no Democrat will have enough delegates to be nominated (2,082), many Party leaders were planning even before that date, when twenty contests were held, many of them in the South, to close ranks around Dukakis—on the assumption that he would be the clear front-runner.

Democratic Party Chairman Paul Kirk, a careful man, began to talk about his idea of holding a meeting with the candidates or their representatives shortly after the final primaries, in New Jersey and California, and within Party circles he had been stressing the importance of reaching a consensus on a ticket before the Convention. When I spoke with Kirk on March 10th, he said that in the remaining big contests—in Michigan, Wisconsin, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, New Jersey, California, and others—"we're not likely to have a photo finish. I think you're going to see a consistent pattern of someone ending up first in most of them." He pointed out that the number of super-delegates—Party officials who will automatically go to the Convention—has been raised since 1984 (to 646, amounting to fifteen per cent of the total number of delegates), and this time will include more members of Congress (eighty per cent of them, as opposed to sixty per cent in 1984), and that, unlike 1984, the Congressional super-delegates are not to be chosen until late April, and that they are likely to be very pragmatic. (In 1984, most of the super-delegates were chosen in January and most of them signed on with Mondale then. This obviated the idea of having super-delegates—which was to give practical politicians a voice in the selection of a candidate later on.) But Kirk's idea of "brokering" the process is not universally popular: a lot of people will want to "broker," and the delegates won't necessarily be as deliverable as such scenarios contemplate. Also, the other candidates understood that Kirk had Dukakis in mind.

None of these cool calculations anticipated the psychological reality that followed Dukakis's defeat in Illinois, or the degree of Jesse Jackson's success in numerous contests. The Dukakis campaign tried hard to break through in Illinois, and therefore the magnitude of his defeat gave a number of leading Democrats pause. As of now, Dukakis has a lead in delegates: 529 to Jackson's 510.5, and 360.8 for Gore, with the rest further back. Jackson has won more popular votes than any other Democrat. In the wake of Illinois, some of Dukakis's weaknesses as a candidate began to get more attention. But these were easier to see than who it was who could overtake him, since all of his rivals have weaknesses, too. And as Dukakis won more endorsements going into Michigan, the "inevitability" strategy got a lift. Despite the rivalries, and even enmities, among the candidates, the campaign leaders of Dukakis's opponents (except

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for Jackson) have been meeting and communicating in an effort to hold Dukakis's vote down, and Dukakis's opponents (except for Jackson) are essentially leaving it to only one of them to make a run at him in some states—Simon in Illinois, Gephardt in Michigan. But at least both Simon and Gore will go against him in Wisconsin, on April 5th, and one question is whether more than one of his opponents (in addition to Jackson) will survive, and divide the vote against him in the industrial states.

Political moods change quickly, of course, and if Dukakis gets moving again, and keeps moving, the downdraft of mid-March will have been forgotten. He received a big boost from the endorsement this week by Bill Bradley, and Senator Christopher Dodd and Governor William O'Neill of Connecticut. These endorsements brought about yet another psychological change in the situation, and if Dukakis wins in Michigan on Saturday he will be widely considered on his way to the nomination. (If Gephardt is defeated in Michigan, his campaign will be over and the eighty-odd House members who his campaign says have endorsed him will be set loose.) Now several key Party members are back to where they were before March 8th—figuring that it's time to try to wrap it up for Dukakis. Mark Siegel, a member of the Democratic National Committee and a man who talks to a lot of political figures, had been until just a few days ago praising the virtues and advantages of staying neutral (so as to be "a player"); now he says, "We know the bottom line, so we should get there earlier, rather than have chaos in Atlanta." Therefore, for a pragmatic politician (and most are), if one is to endorse, this is the time—when one can make a difference—to do it. Some Democrats also point out that now—when there are still several candidates in the race—is the time to endorse, to avoid the appearance of a "stop Jackson" movement. But in fact an unspoken stop-Jackson movement is going on.

Dukakis has often been underestimated, and—some missteps notwithstanding—both he and his campaign organization are skilled. Even as Presidential candidates go, Dukakis is very driven, and knows exactly where he wants to go—and will do what he must to get there. He is an extremely disciplined and tenacious man. After Illinois, some Democrats began to look elsewhere and to entertain all

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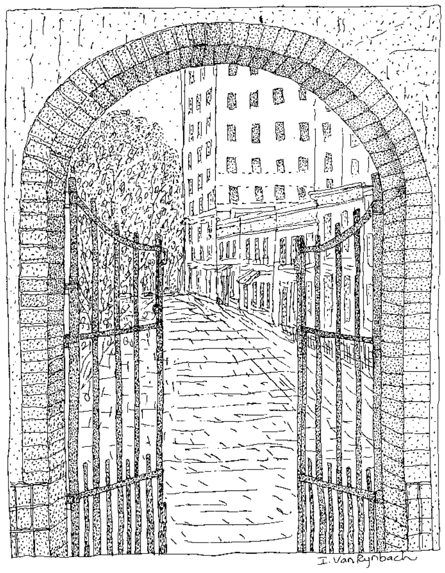
sorts of possibilities. The names of Bill Bradley and Mario Cuomo were back in the air. Even Bradley's endorsement of Dukakis this week didn't convince everyone that Bradley is out of the game for good. (However, it is believed that one reason Bradley endorsed Dukakis was to head off a move to have the New Jersey delegation go to the Convention uncommitted in order to keep the Bradley option alive.) But the prevailing school of thought is that the nominee must come from the candidates in the field. A number of Democrats feel they will have no choice but to end up supporting Dukakis—assuming he does well in the contests to come. Recent polls (for what they're worth now, which isn't much) showing that Dukakis could beat Bush are very helpful to his case, but some Democrats remain troubled that Dukakis's starting to move again doesn't stem from any move on the part of the mass electorate.

The Dukakis camp hopes to complete the elimination contest in short order: to knock off Gephardt in Michigan, Simon in Wisconsin, and Gore in New York—leaving only Dukakis and Jackson standing. But left publicly unsaid by Kirk is what would happen if there isn't a clear pattern of victories in the upcoming contests. (Because the Democratic contests essentially divide up the delegates by proportional representation in congressional districts in each state, it is harder for a victor in a given state to pile up great blocs of delegates.) Kirk and others are said to believe that anyone who has won over half the delegates needed for the nomination has to be considered for it—and, with any luck, only one candidate will have reached that point, but that's not for sure at this point.

Though Dukakis has pressed for a blessing by the A.F.L.-C.I.O., he has not received it because of the constraints on labor's endorsing anyone this year, at least as yet. One person people have been watching is Thomas Donahue, the secretary-treasurer of the A.F.L.-C.I.O. and a very important figure in Democratic politics. The A.F.L.-C.I.O. has not made an endorsement this year (its 1984 endorsement of Mondale turned out to be a mixed blessing for both Mondale and the labor organization) because its constituent unions could reach no consensus on a candidate—though some of their affiliates' local chapters have endorsed candidates. One reason the A.F.L.-C.I.O. has to be careful about endorsing prematurely is that some of its largest and most politically active constituencies are for Jackson. As it turned out, this official neutrality also put labor in a position to be a "broker" if necessary, and spared its appearing, as it did in 1984, to be throwing its weight around. Representatives of some of the campaigns—particularly Dukakis's, Gephardt's, and Jackson's—met with labor officials and, with their own interests in mind, offered to put labor members on their delegate slates. One factor about Dukakis that worries some Democratic leaders is that he has not proved very strong among blue-collar voters thus far. In Illinois, his campaign ran an ad in which a Bostonian official of the New England regional bricklayers' union said, "I've known Mike a long time and I gotta say Dukakis is not your shot-and-beer kind of guy. But working people around here love him. . . . If you want somebody to drink with, call your buddy. If you care about your job, vote for Mike Dukakis." (Some Chicago pols said that this ad raised the question in the minds of many voters, who knew little about him, "What's the matter with Dukakis that he's not a shot-and-beer kind of guy?") Dukakis's foreign-policy views are a bit too far to the left for the comfort of some labor officials, but they, too, have decided that they may have to make a pragmatic judgment, and that, if necessary, they will find Dukakis sound enough.

Donahue said to me recently, "It makes good sense to me that we go into the Convention with a unified body, ready to propel a candidate into the race, and the nation doesn't spend seven days reading about and watching 'the disarray within the Democratic Party.' " He continued, "Our whole role in this turns out to be playing out pretty well. Institutionally, it would have been easier if we had all agreed on one candidate; there's a certain sense of a loss of solidarity. But, on the other hand, we'd have had charges of trying to manipulate the nomination. The result is, we're working in several campaigns and don't have the negative of appearing to dominate a candidate."



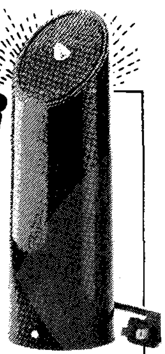
Another person being watched is, of course, Mario Cuomo, who still seems to be conflicted—not completely resigned to the prospect of not being the nominee. The Dukakis people had hoped to get Cuomo's endorsement shortly after March 8th. When I talked to him that day, Cuomo told me that he had promised Paul Simon that he would not endorse anyone until after the Illinois primary, but it seemed likely then that he would not endorse anyone either before the New York primary, on April 19th, or until after all the states have voted. He has perfectly objective reasons, he says, for not endorsing anyone in New York: he has already told his people to support whomever they want, and he runs the risk of looking presumptuous by endorsing one candidate if more than one is still viable. (He did endorse Mondale over Gary Hart in 1984.) But there are some signs that Cuomo might be changing his mind again. The Dukakis people hoped that the Bradley endorsement, from next door in New Jersey, plus those of Connecticut officials, would put pressure on Cuomo and reinforce the idea that if he wants to endorse before the end of the process, and to be relevant, he has to endorse soon. (Bradley and Dukakis deliberately posed against the background of the New York skyline. New Jersey and California hold their primaries on June 7th, the last day.) There is no reason to disbelieve Cuomo when he says, as he did when we talked on March 8th, that he believes that "the Convention should be used to pick the message, not the messenger, or the Party would be very hurt," and that the Party leadership should turn to whoever looks like the consensus winner out of the primaries, and try to rally people around him. But Cuomo has been making a number of appearances around the nation—forswearing any Presidential ambitions, of course. He said to me, "People could say, if I endorse, 'That clever, Machiavellian ruse' "—he would be seen as somehow using his endorsement of someone else to get the nomination for himself.

On the day of our conversation, as the voting in twenty states was taking place, Cuomo, who had been considered by many to favor Dukakis, said to me, "Dukakis will be seen as doing very well today, because he's a Northeasterner and an ethnic getting votes in the South." He continued, sounding less enthusiastic about Dukakis than in previous conversations, "After today, Dukakis is proved the front-runner and he'll be on the hot seat—that's what happened to Gephardt. So Mike will become the target of more scrutiny, and the question is how he handles being the front-runner or being under scrutiny—whether what is turned up about Massachusetts hurts him, what happened in his first term. If he takes credit for the economic recovery, he has to take responsibility for the recession." (When Dukakis first became governor, a recession had already started; the recovery, which occurred throughout New England, actually began before Dukakis's second term—during the period he was out of office—but he helped spread its benefits.)

There are signs that Cuomo is, among other things, still nursing the wound of having been told, before he declared, in February of 1987, that he wouldn't run for the Presidency, that as an ethnic Northeasterner he could not win votes in the South, or be nominated. Dukakis's success must grate—though Cuomo often says that he encouraged Dukakis to make the race. People close to Cuomo (as close as people outside his own family can be) believe that the real reasons he didn't run had less to do with the supposed impossibility of a sitting governor of New York—with one house of the legislature dominated by the other party—making the race than with the fact that his tentative political forays early last year (to Los Angeles and New Orleans) didn't go particularly well, and he didn't want to risk the indignities of running, or rejection by the voters. Cuomo is very different from Dukakis—as flamboyant as Dukakis is contained. Moreover, Cuomo was later reliably reported to have been annoyed with the Dukakis campaign's letting it be known that Cuomo would probably endorse Dukakis after March 8th—its appearing to take him for granted. Yet some think Cuomo is leaning again toward Dukakis, and he now says he will announce within a week or ten days whether he will make an endorsement.

LABOR officials are pleased with the personality changes that have gone on among the Democratic candidates, leading Gephardt and then Dukakis and Gore, in their various ways, to run as populists, as champions of the workingman. (Jackson had been there all along.) All of the Democratic candidates have arrived at the conclusion that the most salient issue in this election is economic nationalism—the concern on the part of many Americans that we are slipping, and being overtaken, economically (especially by the Japanese), and are no longer No. 1. Gephardt was the first Democratic candidate to catch on to—and exploit—this concern, and his early success caused Dukakis to sharpen his message, and Gore to change his completely. This theme turns up in the Republican race as well, but Bush, running sycophantically as the true heir to the Reagan legacy, has to be oblique about it—and thus talks about the need to do more about education.

It is a very large irony that at the end of eight years of Reagan's feel-good Presidency majorities of people are telling pollsters that they are anxious about their economic future. The book "The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers" is a best-seller. Yet Reagan himself, characteristically, floats serenely above all this and remains popular (though not as popular as he has been). However, the sharp congressional and public reaction to Reagan's sending of thirty-two hundred troops to Honduras last week, in response to a Sandinista incursion across the border, showed again his weak standing on the issue of Nicaragua. It also showed how much doubt there is about whatever the Administration says about Nicaragua. A great many people didn't believe that the President of Honduras had initiated the request for U.S. military aid, as the Administration said he had. Many did believe that the dispatching of troops had to do with the House's recent turning down of all aid to the Contras—with liberal Democrats and Reagan supporters among Republicans joining to kill the compromise proposal for "humanitarian" aid only. The ceasefire just arrived at by the Contras and the Sandinistas took a great many people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—apparently including the Administration—by surprise; nobody is sure what it really means. The guilty plea by former national-security adviser Robert McFarlane for some of his activities in the Iran-Contra affair (not telling Congress the truth) on March 11th was as a bell tolling, and when it was followed five days later by the multiple-count indictments of Oliver North, John Poindexter, Richard Secord, and Albert Hakim the subject came back into prominence. It will come and go for some time to come, and though Republicans insist it won't be a factor in the election, they clearly wish it would disappear.

THAT part of the nominating process that took place on March 8th ("Super Tuesday") was a travesty. Democrats in twenty states voted—the Republicans had seventeen contests—with only the haziest notion of who the candidates were or what they stood for. (According to one exit poll, only twenty-one per cent knew that Dukakis is a liberal.) It was a tactical battle, not a competition of ideas. The strategists for the various campaigns played a game of poker—trying to dope out where opponents were placing theirs ads, and to raise them. This seemed to consume most of their time and thought. On the equivalent day four years ago, contests took place in nine states, only three of them in the South. Many of the Southerners who cooked the thing up for this year argue that, because of the emergence of Gore as a serious candidate, they were vindicated, but the outcome of the process has nothing to do with whether it made any sense. Anyway, Jackson and Dukakis were also major victors on March 8th. The idea was to get the candidates to pay more attention to the South, and to tip the scales toward a more conservative nominee than the Democrats had been serving up (with the exception of Jimmy Carter). Instead—and as some Party officials had warned—the candidates spent even less time in the various Southern states, because there were so many of them to cover.

All indications are that most of the people voted on March 8th on the basis of name recognition, and reaction to television advertising. In previous elections, the truism was that the effect of "paid" television was marginal; this time—given the size of the area that the candidates had to cover and the brief period they had to do so—it may have been decisive. (The impact of the ads was enhanced by network news stories about them.) Despite Gore's success—carrying six states (Arkansas, Kentucky, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Nevada), and coming in second, after Jackson, in five (Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Virginia)—the real story of March 8th was that it made at least the New Hampshire contest (which Dukakis had won) more, rather than less, important than before. The Democratic candidates—with the exception of Jackson—came out in the order of their spending for television advertising. (Jackson carried five Southern states and came in second in eleven, four of which were Southern, and followed this with a victory in South Carolina the following Saturday.) However, Gephardt's complaint that his virtual shutout—he carried only his home state of Missouri—occurred because he was outspent was probably only partly the case. (The Gephardt campaign ran some tough ads against Dukakis and Gore.) Gephardt had already been weakened by the attacks on his change of persona (he had even darkened his eyebrows) and revision of so many of his "beliefs"—and the continuing criticism of him in the press, combined with the ads that both Dukakis and Gore ran against him for the March 8th contests, was enough to finish him off. Even his advisers indicate that if he does not succeed in Michigan this weekend that would be the end. After his poor showing on March 8th, a few people (including former Democratic chairman Robert Strauss) suggested that he end his candidacy.

A knowledgeable person says that the Dukakis campaign spent far more on negative ads against Gephardt for the March 8th contests than it let on. One of the best and most effective ads run thus far was Dukakis's against Gephardt—showing a red-headed man in a navy-blue suit, such as Gephardt usually wears, doing somersaults and other acrobatics, including jumping through a hoop, while the voice-over told of some of Gephardt's revised positions on issues. Another Dukakis ad listed some of the political-action committees (PACs) Gephardt had taken money from for his Presidential campaign—a direct assault on Gephardt's claim to being "an outsider." Gephardt responded, in person and in an ad, by criticizing Dukakis for accepting money for his campaign from people who do business with

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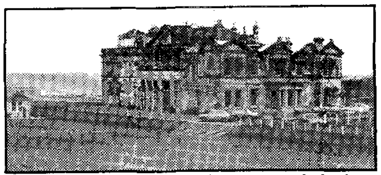

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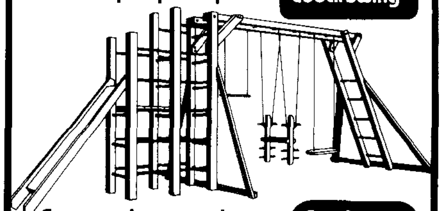

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Massachusetts. Dukakis, who had self-righteously said that he would insist on running a "positive" campaign, turned aggressive, and even rough, toward Gephardt in the period leading up to the March 8th voting—and his staff described this change as one that Dukakis had most reluctantly made, in light of Gephardt's bombarding of Dukakis with his effective, and successful, "Belgian endive" ad, raising a question about Dukakis's knowledge of agriculture, in the final days of the South Dakota primary, on February 23rd. (The Gephardt campaign ran a Southern version of this ad for March 8th.) These protestations notwithstanding, Dukakis has a history of playing rough in campaigns, and Gephardt's action in South Dakota provided Dukakis with the excuse he had been waiting for. An associate of Dukakis said to me shortly after the South Dakota primary, "Now people will see how good Dukakis is as a counterpuncher; he's the best in the business—it's his special niche." This person added, "Some people are eloquent, some are funny, some are charming, but Dukakis is tough." He said of Dukakis, "He was dying to get at Gephardt, and Gephardt gave him the opening—and he'll rue the day he did." Dukakis was given the opportunity to climb off the moralistic hook that he sometimes places himself on. But his more aggressive debate style—of pushing and pushing a question to Gephardt, and following with a sarcastic remark—came off to a number of observers as disagreeable, snarly, and not the sort of thing they look for in a President.

Both Dukakis and Gore were anxious to finish Gephardt off—Dukakis because his people thought that Gephardt's strong anti-corporation, anti-foreign-competition message would be a threat in the industrial states, and Gore because he and Gephardt were fighting over the same white, slightly more conservative voters than those going to Dukakis. (There were some second thoughts about this in the Dukakis camp—why not, some realized, let a weakened Gephardt compete with Gore for votes in the subsequent states?) One of the disturbing things about the Democratic contest is the splinterization of the voters that it is causing—into blacks, liberals, and centrists—instead of building coalitions. And it is a reflection on the white Democratic candidates that (unlike Walter Mondale in 1984) none of them has a claim on

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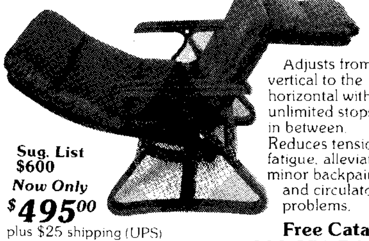

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black voters. (Gore wins blacks in his Senate campaigns, in Tennessee, but in the Presidential race he is no match for Jackson, who won ninety-six per cent of the black vote on March 8th.) Governing, and holding the country together, require the building of coalitions. The Democrats, to win or to govern, will have to do this in the course of the election contest in the fall.

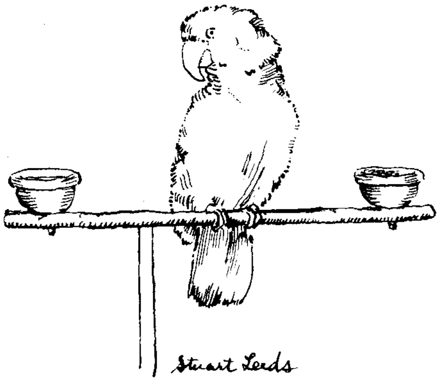
Dukakis was also helped, in the March 8th contests as in others, by his campaign's having more field workers on the ground in key areas—especially Florida—far longer than the other candidates did. (Gephardt had withdrawn his Southern-based workers early in the year to throw everything he had at Iowa.) While the March 8th contests were usually characterized as "Southern," there is little that is Southern in the most populous areas of Florida, and Dukakis didn't win among real Southerners. His victories in Florida and Texas, the states with the most delegates to offer that day—he also carried Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maryland, Hawaii, and Idaho—came from carefully, methodically, targeting subgroups within each state. Dukakis, who speaks fluent Spanish, carried the Hispanics in southern Texas. He also went after transplanted Northerners and the research, high-tech communities and the upper-income, better-educated voters who form his natural constituency. Kitty Dukakis, who is Jewish, and her father, Harry Ellis Dickson, an associate conductor of the Boston Pops orchestra, helped Dukakis capture the condos in south Florida.

Dukakis's victories on March 8th stopped short—as his victories often do—of being a triumph. For all their success, the Dukakis people were somewhat disappointed with the outcome. They had hoped and tried to win North Carolina as well as Texas and Florida (Gore carried North Carolina, and Jackson came in second), on the theory that that would be the knockout punch. As it turned out, Dukakis's victories in Texas and Florida masked the fact that he came in third in nine states that day. And Jackson ended up later with more delegates in Texas than Dukakis. Dukakis has consistently found his natural constituency and then pretty much stopped there. The political "scouting report" on him is that he finishes flat, and it was because John Sasso, his former top adviser, understood this that he came up with the plan for the Presidential campaign: raise more money than anyone, early, open more field offices, and convince the press that the money and the field offices show that Dukakis—an unlikely nominee, or so it seemed at the outset—was to be taken seriously. When Dukakis entered the race, both Gary Hart and Joseph Biden were in it and were seen as stronger candidates. Sasso, who now works for an advertising firm in Boston, is in touch with Dukakis and with some campaign officials, and feeds in ideas.

Dukakis has had some success in selling himself as someone who brought jobs to Massachusetts, but the national applicability of what Dukakis did do in Massachusetts is still unclear. He is big on getting various participants—labor, business, academia—in a room to work out approaches to projects. When his advisers are asked what he would actually do, nationwide, to promote economic development and create jobs, they talk vaguely about "partnerships," and "leveraging" among government, business, and labor. (Dukakis has proposed federal spending of five hundred million dollars a year for economic development.) An adviser says Dukakis is not more specific because he wants to avoid the trap of saying that what he did for Massachusetts he can do for the country. In the course of a tour of a rubber factory in Texas, televised on C-SPAN, Dukakis, commiserating with the owner about America's loss of the competitive edge (the factory's complicated computer was imported), was asked, "How do we come back?" He replied, "That's a very good question."

On the night of the Illinois primary, Dukakis had a ready explanation for his defeat—that it was understandable that the voters had gone for "two favorite sons," Paul Simon and Jackson—but in fact the Dukakis campaign was quite disappointed with the outcome. His camp had hoped to catch Simon. Simon, who had almost been forgotten because he passed up the March 8th contests, essentially won for the reason that he stayed in: Chicago machine politicians who were on his delegate slate wanted to go to the Convention. The word was passed by Dukakis allies that a way would be found to get these people to the Convention anyway—but they weren't buying. Simon benefitted from loyalty, but he also became the vehicle for those who didn't want to see Jackson do too well. Simon himself said before the voting, in what many saw as an unmistakable bid for an anti-Jackson vote, "The Dukakis game is to try to take votes away from me, not so that Mike can be in first place, but so that Jesse can be first, and knock me out of the ballgame." A Dukakis ad that tried to counter Simon's calling for support so that he could be a broker made a lot of news in Illinois (and nationally) but little impression on Illinois voters, who don't exactly worship at the altar of pure politics, and some observers say the ad, focussing as it did on process, was precisely the wrong touch. (The ad said, "Some people would like to turn back the clock—to go back to the days when the voters didn't really pick the nominee.") It seemed that Dukakis was temperamentally and politically lost in the emotional Byzantium that is Illinois politics; by comparison, Massachusetts is Walden Pond. Though they have recently begun to wage the separate contest for super-delegates on Capitol Hill, the Dukakis people seem to understand that their candidate must essentially win it on the road. Their money and machinery still count for a lot: shortly after the March 8th contests they dispatched about eighty field workers to Michigan, a caucus state where organization is believed to count for a great deal, and they have long been at work in Wisconsin.

For Michigan, Dukakis won endorsements of sorts—not quite the all-out ones he had hoped for—from Detroit Mayor Coleman Young and Governor James Blanchard. (Blanchard, who will chair the Platform Committee at the Convention, can't be overtly too partisan.) The support of Young—one of the few black elected officials to stray from Jackson, although a number of others stayed neutral—was expected to help



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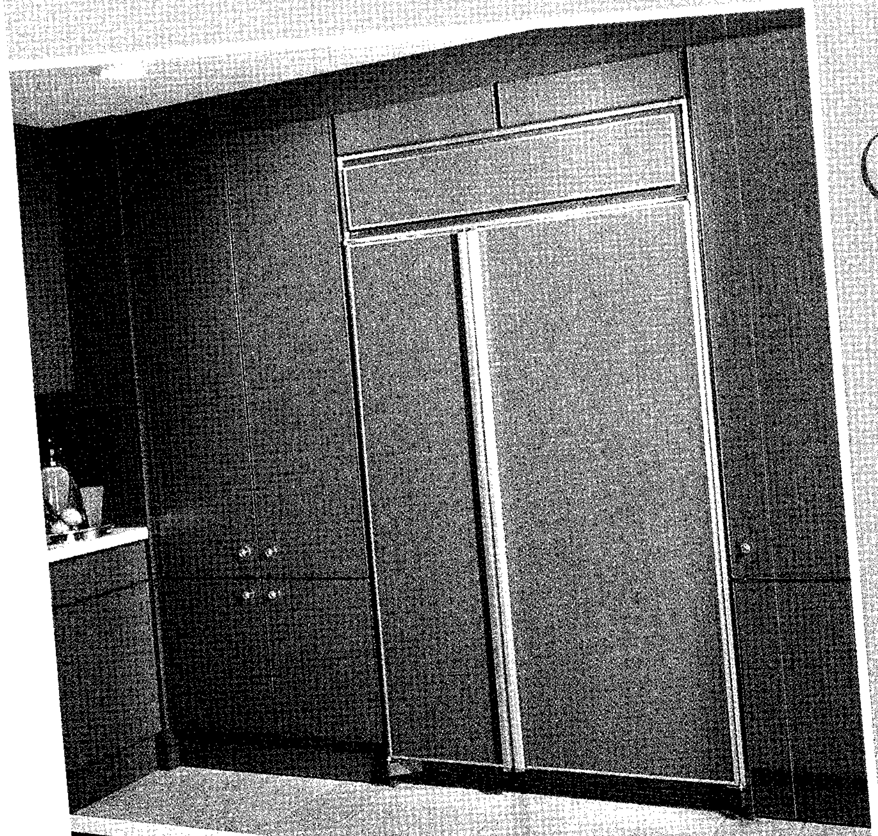

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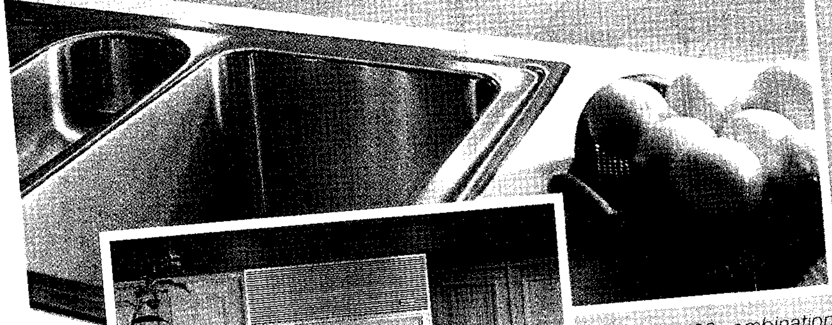
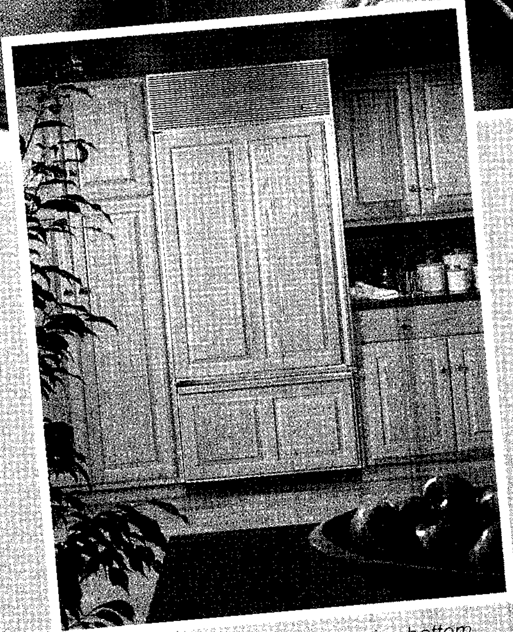


Model 532 combination refrigerator/freezer with new optional panelized grille



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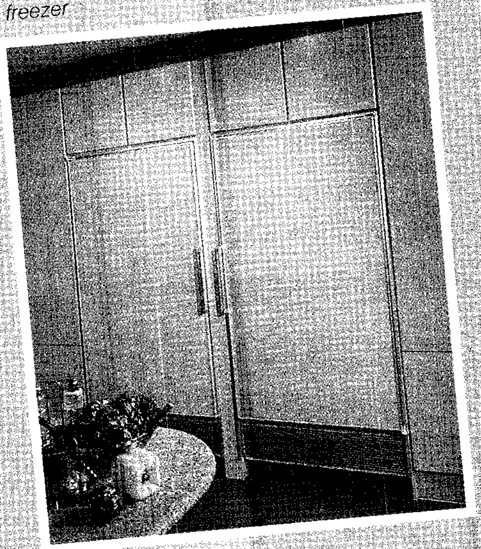
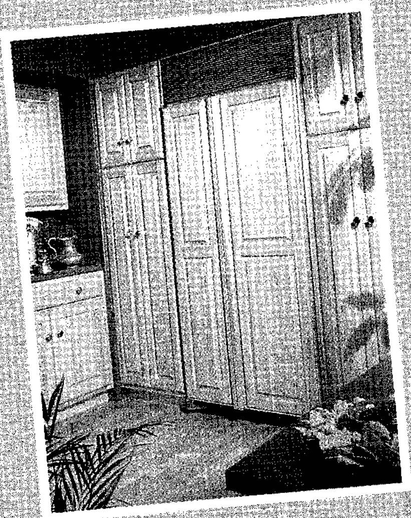
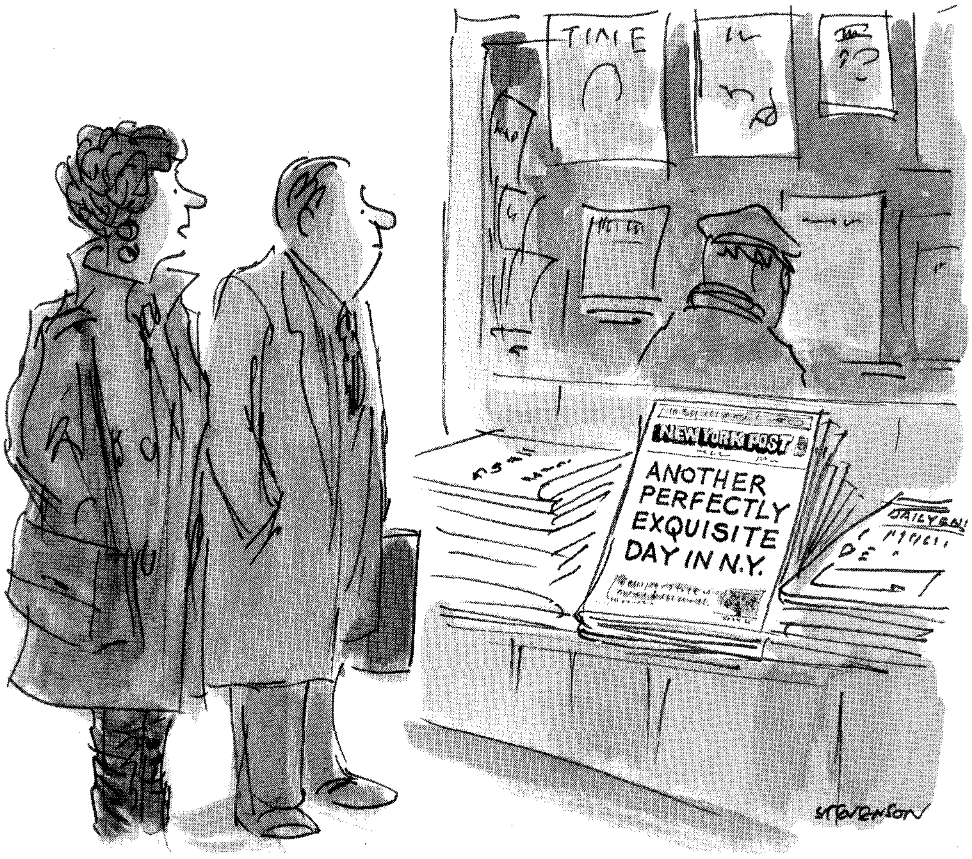




Model 561 combination refrigerator/freezer

All 500 Series models shown feature new Eurostyled interiors



"Somehow it doesn't seem the same since Rupert Murdoch's gone."

Dukakis among the powerful public employees' union in Michigan. Dukakis was also endorsed by some House members, but his announcement a few days ago, upon receiving the endorsement of Senator Donald Riegle, that he now supports Riegle's trade amendment, got him some negative press coverage. Riegle's proposal is less protectionist than Gephardt's, but until then Dukakis had argued vigorously that no new trade legislation was needed. ("You want another law; I will act.") Thus Dukakis blew whatever chance he had to argue that he is consistent, a national candidate who doesn't pander. (Although he had already done a bit of that.) Gephardt had hoped to have strong labor support in Michigan, but almost immediately after his near shutout on March 8th labor officials said that he was likely to receive only token support from the United Auto Workers in Michigan. Politics is not a sentimental trade. But John Dingell, a powerful representative from Michigan, has been in the state rustling up labor support for Gephardt. And the Gephardt campaign is making heavy use of its "Hyundai" ad—which says that if the United States slapped the same kinds of tariffs on a Hyundai that South Korea puts on a Chrysler K car the seven-thousand-dollar Hyundai would cost forty-eight thousand dollars in the United States. (There are some factual problems with this ad, but it makes the point to angry workers.)

The Dukakis campaign had hoped for endorsements by Arkansas's Governor Bill Clinton, Senator Bob Graham, of Florida, former North Carolina Governor James Hunt, and William Winter, the former Governor of Mississippi, after, if not before, March 8th—but these have not as yet come through. It had been hoped that these people would say that Dukakis had made the connection between economic needs and the new South, and that that would make him a more credible candidate for the nomination. (Clinton, who wants to be the keynote speaker at the Convention, is in a ticklish spot. And Gore carried Arkansas, with Dukakis coming in second. The Dukakis people reportedly threatened Clinton that if he wasn't coöperative a woman or a Hispanic would be the keynoter.) So even though Dukakis is seen as the front-runner (despite Jackson's success), he still has a long slog ahead of him.

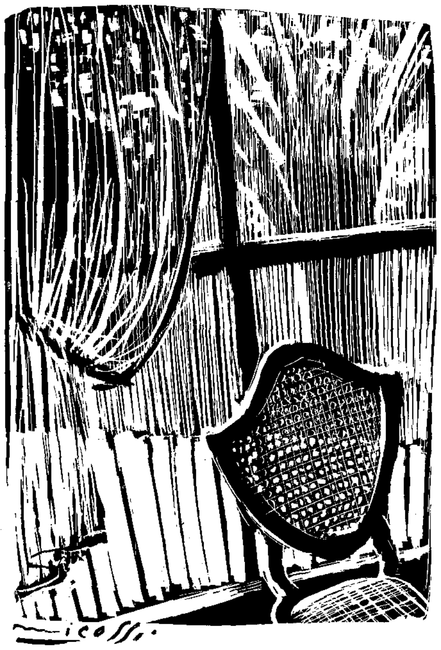
INEVITABLY, Jackson's success caused the question "What does Jesse want?"—an inherently patronizing question—to be increasingly raised. But, to the extent that the question implies that the answer lies within the framework of conventional politics, it is probably the wrong question. The Jackson of 1984, who demanded and had to be granted some things at the National Convention—particularly changes in the rules—is not the Jackson of 1988. And the Mondale people had, perhaps unconsciously, got off on the wrong foot with Jackson in the course of the 1984 campaign by suggesting that he should not be in the race for the nomination—that he was getting in Mondale's way. (This time, no one's in a position to say that.) This year, argue some people close to Jackson, he has transcended any conventional candidacy and gone way beyond where he was in 1984: he has become, they argue, the voice of and the symbol for the angry and the dispossessed. He speaks with validity when he tells audiences that he has stood at plant gates of companies that were shutting down and forcing people into unemployment, he has been at farm foreclosures, he has (unlike any other candidate) marched with gays and lesbians demanding more rights. Actually, most of the white vote he has been getting comes from the more affluent who share his political viewpoint or are registering their discontent with the other candidates. And the estimates are that Jackson has received at most ten per cent of the white vote—and in some states less. In Illinois, where the voters know him best, he still could not break out of the racial divide—and received only seven per cent of the white vote. Most of the increase in his votes this year, over 1984, stems from the fact that—in part by default—he is winning a much higher per cent of the black vote.

Jackson has the clearest message of any candidate in either party. His overarching theme is "economic violence"—about corporations who take American jobs overseas or suddenly close plants, and the foreclosing of farms. He calls for the government to greatly increase its protection of the economically or politically weak—the fact that his program doesn't come close to adding up is to be overlooked. He aims his appeal straight to the gut. He speaks more eloquently than any other candidate on the subjects of drugs and education. In fact, he speaks more eloquently than any other candidate on anything. Ann Lewis, one of his advisers, says, "This situation is different from 1984," when what the Mondale people wanted was for Jackson to try to persuade blacks to vote for the ticket in November. "Now he has transcended that, to reach broader audiences, and at that level his white opponents are less specific." What he wants, some who know him best say, is simply to be treated as what he is, a political force who has gone out and won a lot of votes—to "be at the table," to be included in. One should not think of it, these people say, as someone playing poker—calling for control over, say, two Cabinet posts—but as someone who is part of the effort to elect a Democratic President. Jackson functions best when he is considered a peer, a friend of his says.

Jackson and some of his top supporters see a connection between his beginning to do very well and Kirk's calling on Democrats to close ranks around the front-runner—and are certain he didn't mean Jackson. (The world of politics being as porous as it is, word got back to Jackson about talk, after Paul Kirk became Party chairman, in 1985, of how Kirk had clipped Jackson's power by standing up to him, and this is said to still rankle Jackson. He was also displeased when the Party put out a now forgotten policy report in 1986 without talking to him about it.) Ann Lewis says that most people who ask "What does Jesse want?" think about this in terms of what they would want, but that Jackson focusses at a different level. She says, "People who ask that have always had a résumé in one pocket and a career ladder in the other, and he hasn't. What he wants is to be made a full partner all the way through." There is much talk on the part of others (also patronizing) to the effect that "Jesse doesn't want to make trouble this year." That misses the point.

On the other hand, Jackson tends to make it up as he goes along, and to be of various minds and moods. Moreover, he is surrounded by a number of people, several of whom have their own ideas—or want to negotiate on his behalf. He has lines both to some radical figures and to some of the icons of the establishment—including the ultimate insider, the Washington attorney Clark Clifford. Some establishment figures, it seems, are trying to get their hooks into Jackson in order to persuade him to be a good fellow and not cause trouble. And Jackson himself recently introduced the issue that had been presumably laid aside—a question about the Party's rules. It was because he was riled by all the talk that the super-delegates should rally around the front-runner—and because he actually had the most popular votes—that he started saying recently that the super-delegates should be apportioned according to the popular vote, "to protect the integrity of the one-person, one-vote democracy." The obvious response to this is that the super-delegates are meant to be independent, to make their own judgments—but the obvious answer to *that* is that calls for them to rally around the front-runner also change their role. How far Jackson plans to push this point is anyone's guess as of now.

This leaves the question of what happens if Jackson himself, as is not totally out of the question, ends up the front-runner, or very close to the front-runner. All his protestations and the insistence of some of his allies notwithstanding, Jackson did not get in this with the idea of being the nominee, and he doesn't expect to be the nominee. The mathematics of the congressional districts of the states to come, say the experts, make it highly unlikely that he will have the most delegates at the end of the contests—but he could well come in a close second. Party leaders, though they can't say so out loud, view Jackson's increased strength with apprehension—even if he won't have a claim on the nomination. Jackson knows that quite a bit of phoning around about how to "stop" him has been going on recently. Should he have the most delegates, or close to that, Ann Lewis says, "we are in uncharted water."



A LOT of people have views on how Albert Gore should have run his campaign—so that he would be further along by now. Everyone's an expert on how other people should run their campaigns. Some say he should have run in Iowa and New Hampshire—that he could have done better than his people thought. Actually, Gore had the worst of both worlds in New Hampshire—his campaign spent quite a bit of money there (over four hundred thousand dollars, nearly the legal limit), and he spent some time there, but he was in it without really being in it, and, using money that would have come in handy later, finished fifth. Gore is now paying the price in two ways for not having entered earlier: he has been later than the others in finding his voice and his themes, and he is still barely known outside the South. Running for the Presidency is like any exercise—one has to get in condition. While the others were campaigning flat out—and all of them got better over time—Gore was collecting endorsements, and though he was making appearances, it wasn't the same thing as campaigning. Gore has the potential for being a very powerful candidate—he is knowledgeable, and has more potential "star quality" than anyone, other than Jackson, in the race (in either Party). But Gore's absence, or apparent absence, from the first two states denied him the coverage in the press that other candidates were getting—and still are getting. When television news programs want "reactions" from Democratic candidates, they tend to go to the front-runner—Dukakis.

And then, when the race came to Gore, in the South, he floundered. He had started out his campaign with the rationale that he was more conservative on defense than his competitors—presumably to position himself well in the South. (Many of the architects of March 8th had Sam Nunn in mind. Nunn announced that he had voted for Gore—but that was after the fact.) Gore made the differences between him-

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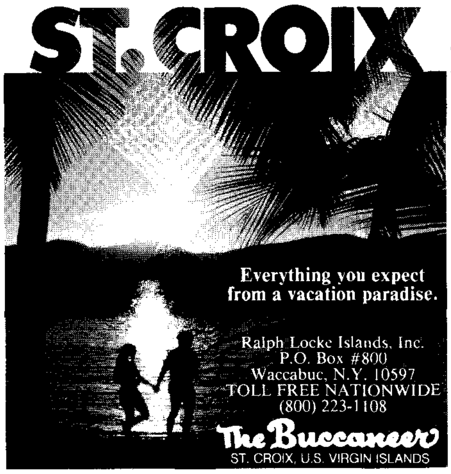

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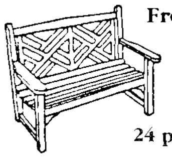

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self and the other candidates greater than they were. And then it occurred to him and his campaign managers that the voters did not consider the defense issue very important—they rarely ever do, and Reagan, through his negotiations and I.N.F. treaty, has neutralized the arms-control issue—and that people were more interested in the economy (as they usually are). So then Gore, too, became a populist, uttering full-throated cries about the need to "put the White House back on the side of working men and women." With the help of a new media adviser, he cut some new ads, wearing a plaid shirt (purchased for him by the media adviser)—rather than his usual navy-blue suit—and talking populist talk with small groups of people. And then Gore appropriated Gary Hart's 1984 theme, saying that the choice is between "the politics of the future and the politics of the past"—Dukakis had tried this one on for a while in New Hampshire. And the other thing that happened to Gore was that he seemed, for a while, to clutch—becoming less loose than he had been before. Close observers of Gore say that this came from his sudden realization of what it meant to be in a Presidential race. After a while, he loosened up again, but he had lost precious time.

It is reliably said that Gore was influenced in going down the military road by some of his early backers—some money men and some of the editors of *The New Republic*, whose judgment he had to respect since they had shown such faith in him. It is also the case that the populism was not new to Gore—that he had run successfully for the House and the Senate on similar themes. Gore also points, with validity, to consumer issues he championed in Congress—and gives them (vis-à-vis Gephardt) a sharper anti-corporate tone than before. His managers also toned down his combativeness in debates, because it was raising questions both about his maturity and about what he was actually for. Until very shortly before the voting on March 8th, Gore was widely written off as all but dead, and the claims from his camp that he was moving were dismissed as so much propaganda. This provided Gore with even more glory when it turned out that he carried six states that day, and came in second to Jackson in five Southern states.

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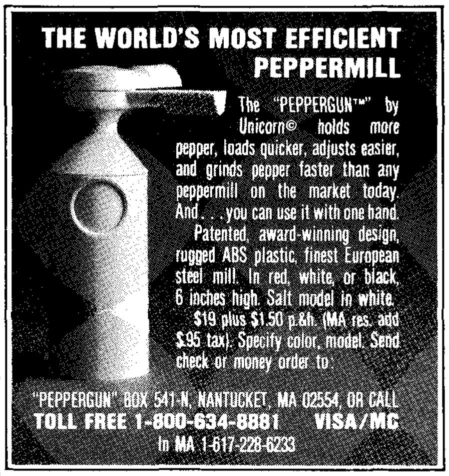

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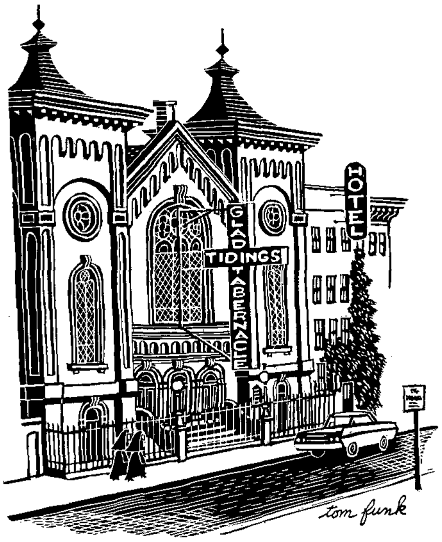
the South. His campaign hadn't done much planning for after March 8th, so he and his people had to scramble for both money and a strategy. And they were caught between the need to no longer appear to be picking and choosing among the states, and the reality that he was not prepared to run everywhere. Though he campaigned a bit in Illinois, it was with no real expectation of doing well, and he finished fourth. And, in attempting to do what Fred Martin, Gore's campaign manager, calls "establish a dialogue" with Dukakis, Gore continued to show something of a heavy hand. In Illinois, he said, "We lost four of the last five national elections, twice by a vote of forty-nine to one. Mike Dukakis represents the politics of the past. I represent the politics of the future." He likened Dukakis to Mondale. His campaign is now looking at Wisconsin for his first Northern success, or at least a strong showing (but Dukakis has been at work there, and Simon, having got a new lease from Illinois, is also working in Wisconsin). The Gore people had considered making Connecticut, which holds its primary on March 29th, its target, but then came to the conclusion that it was Dukakis's kind of state. (And now Dukakis has key endorsements there.) The Gore people are hoping that somewhere, before long, Gore can do well enough to be on a roll going into the next industrial states—but Wisconsin, on April 5th, holds the last contest of any significance before New York, on the nineteenth, and it is believed within the Gore camp that in order to have money and "momentum" going into New York, Gore has to do well somewhere before that.

Though Gore is not well known in the industrial states, Martin says, "Time is on our side, because there is a gap of time before we get to New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio." He points out that three weeks before the March 8th contest most Southerners didn't know that Gore was a Southerner. His strategy is based on Gore's doing very well in the last several states, defeating Dukakis in at least some of them, and then arguing that as the voters saw more of Dukakis they rejected him. Even if Gore doesn't have as many delegates as Dukakis, the argument would be made that he was the "political winner" of the later contests and should be the nominee, and would not have as many vulnerabilities as the liberal Dukakis. Martin, who worked in the Mondale campaign, argues that the "inevitability" strategy of the Dukakis campaign is "the most vulnerable argument a campaign can make." He points out that Gore got more votes than Bush did in eight Southern and border states, whereas Dukakis outpolled Bush in only four, and that on March 8th Gore received the votes of about a third of those who had voted for Reagan in 1984 and also about a third of the independents.

There is much talk—including within Gore's circle—that Gore, if he does well enough, and if he doesn't poison relations with, say, Dukakis too much, could end up with the second slot on the Presidential ticket. Gore, while insisting that he is after the Presidency—and there is no reason not to believe him—is not unaware of the possibility that he could end up as the Vice-Presidential candidate, and that that would not be a bad start. However, if Jackson comes out ahead of Gore in delegates, this would complicate any reaching around Jackson for a running mate—even though there is little reason to believe as of now that Jackson would want that spot. It's not his kind of role.

ON March 11th, Gary Hart, facing reality at last, withdrew from the race. He had just about fallen off the map, and was out of money—and hadn't done well enough to qualify for any more federal funds. On the preceding Tuesday, he had drawn a blank, receiving only a handful of votes. His withdrawal statement was a graceful and intelligent one, and underscored the sad story of this smart and thoughtful (in the intellectual sense) man. Hart said, "I got a fair hearing. And the people have decided. Now I clearly should not go forward."



A CANDIDACY that succeeds is believed to be driven by brilliance, and one that fails is written off as managed by hopeless incompetents—and there is no mercy in the field of politics. The interaction of the two is often overlooked—but the brilliant team would be seen as less so if the failing one didn't help. Thus, the Bush campaign is now widely seen as having done nothing wrong, and the Dole campaign as having done nothing right. While this is closer to the truth than such comparisons often are, there were times when the Bush-Dole race was, or could have been, a closer call—and the whole theory, concentrating on tactics, as it does, overlooks the role of the candidates. Neither Bush nor Dole has been a particularly marvellous candidate, but Bush has shown more resilience and discipline than Dole—and this has made a big difference. Dole has had trouble containing his anger, and even bitterness—which sometimes slips over into self-pity. ("Nobody gave me anything.") When Dole is angry, it shows in his expressive face and in his demeanor. He was so rocked by his loss to Bush in New Hampshire that he lost valuable time. Even Bush people say that the race would have been different if Dole had concentrated on a few states in the March 8th contests—North Carolina, Missouri, and Oklahoma—rather than squandering his time and resources on other states as well. Elizabeth Dole is from North Carolina, and Missouri borders on Dole's home state of Kansas, so the losses there were particularly humiliating. The Bush people, to rub it in, went right at Dole in those states, too. And Bush people agree that if Dole had won New Hampshire the race would have been very different; one Bush strategist says that in that case Dole could have won several states on March 8th—and wouldn't have been completely shut out, as he was, in the races for delegates in Texas and Florida. As it turned out, Bush took sixteen of the seventeen states—Pat Robertson won the caucuses in Washington state—and collected 577 delegates, while Dole won only about a hundred delegates (some of these outside the South). Dole was also at a disadvantage because five of the Republican contests gave all the delegates to whoever won the state (in contrast to the proportional representation in the Democratic contests).

So the battle of New Hampshire continues to be waged—by the Dole people, against each other. There is no question that there were miscalculations: despite the urging of some, the Dole camp didn't prepare an ad to "inoculate" Dole against the predictable charge from the Bush people—in a very tax-conscious state—that Dole might raise taxes, and they failed, for various reasons, to get one on the air toward the end (though the Bush people managed to get a last-minute ad on, probably through string-pulling by the governor of New Hampshire); Richard Wirthlin, Dole's pollster, misinterpreted the fluctuating poll numbers. But all this overlooks the role that Bush and Dole played. And though the Bush campaign is rightly credited with farsightedness, the Bush people had to hurriedly re-create their candidate in New Hampshire. Dole's "mean streak" was showing (even before he said the epochal "Stop lying about my record" on election night). In front of television cameras, he told a du Pont supporter who was badgering him about taxes, "Get back in your cage." In the debate that took place on the Sunday before the voting, Dole was booby-trapped by Pete du Pont's stagy demand that he sign a no-tax pledge that New Hampshire requires of its officials—of such stunts is history made—and he was prone to quips, which don't always go over well with the public. But New Hampshire was Bush's state to begin with.

The fact that Bush has had far better campaign machinery behind him goes back to the personalities and temperaments of Bush and Dole. Dole's lack of a decent, even minimally competent campaign machine was Dole's handling of his Senate staff writ large. (So was his publicly blaming his staff for his New Hampshire defeat; we heard no such sounds out of Bush after Iowa.) The Dole campaign's lack of a strategy mirrored his propensity as a Senate leader to take things as they come—working things out at the moment. In fact, when it seemed, following March 8th, that he was going to pull out of the race either before or after Illinois—Dole, staggered by the magnitude of his defeat on March 8th, was torn, and was receiving conflicting advice, over whether to stay in—some of his theretofore stronger Senate supporters thought that it was for the best that his candidacy was virtually over. (At that point, Dole was facing a humiliating defeat in Illinois, and the gap between him and Bush was widening by the day.) Even senators who had worked closely with Dole in the Senate felt that they had learned some things about him in the course of the campaign. They had thought that talk about his inability to delegate was just gossip among Senate staff people; they were surprised by his weakness on issues; the "mean streak" turned out to be more real than they had thought, as did Dole's propensity for being a loner—they were struck by the narrow range of his human contact. They feared that if Dole went on in the Presidential race he would undermine his role as a Senate leader—and divide the Party for no real reason. Party leaders who had thought Dole would be the stronger general-election candidate underwent a change of mind in light of the disarray within his organization and what one called his "one-note" and "whiny" campaigning.

But Dole, despite his humiliation in Illinois—Bush beat him fifty-five to thirty-six—decided to stay in the race for a while. His Senate supporters and the Republican National Committee Chairman, Frank Fahrenkopf, had to accept his decision, but publicly as well as privately urged him to keep his campaign "positive." Dole's associates say that he'll make his next stab in Wisconsin—the Republicans have already done Michigan, and Connecticut is one of Bush's home states (he actually grew up there)—and that after that he'll reassess again and wants to make a graceful exit. (At this point, Dole is far behind Bush in Wisconsin.) Even if he stops campaigning actively, it's said, Dole will probably put his campaign on hold rather than withdraw. He believes that the Iran-Contra affair might start hurting Bush, and he wants to be around to catch the fallout. As of now, Bush has 788 (to Dole's 178) of the 1,139 delegates needed for the Republican nomination—and Dole would have to win over ninety per cent of the remaining delegates in order to win the nomination. But he is far from being the first person who is reluctant to give up a candidacy.

The Bush campaign's strength was the mirror image of the Dole campaign's weakness. The Bush group, which contained a number of people who had been through Presidential campaigns before, had been at work for three years, and though it has had the tensions that any campaign has, it has pretty much managed to keep them quiet. For a long time, Dole had almost no one around him with national experience—Wirthlin was the only prominent one, and he didn't join the campaign until last October. When William Brock took over the campaign—and that was not until last November—much of Washington murmured approval: Brock, a former senator from Tennessee and Cabinet officer and a scion of the candy family, is a courtly man of moderate views who takes the time to cultivate good relationships with the press (as the wise people here do). At last, it was thought, and Brock said, Dole would delegate. But Brock, though he had been chairman of the Republican National Committee in the late seventies, had no direct experience in a Presidential campaign. David Keene, whom Brock publicly fired (along with Donald Devine, another Dole adviser) not long before the March 8th contests, was one of the few people around Dole with such experience. The loss of Keene and Devine, who have good credentials among the right wing, was not especially helpful to Dole at that point. At the heart of it was a power struggle between Brock and the two men, but even Brock's admirers were baffled that he would do something like that so publicly—and, worst of all, blindside his candidate, who didn't know about the firings until after the fact. When Brock took over, he installed a whole new layer of campaign workers—which only increased the chaos—and he failed to solve the problem of Dole's being surrounded by a number of conflicting voices, and going off on his own. Brock is also accused of "bleeding" the Dole campaign—running its expenditures dangerously high. But when he got to the campaign it had already spent a good deal, yet had done virtually no planning or polling. The campaign—and the candidate—continued to display a lack of discipline. And there continued to be a lack of strategy. When, after New Hampshire, Dole joked to reporters, "We get in the plane and say 'Go

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in that direction,' " he was close to the truth.

THE one thing the Dole people hadn't reckoned on, and couldn't overcome, was Reagan's popularity among Republican voters—and they couldn't break the lock that Bush got on Reagan's supporters. The sycophancy worked. The irony is that what was seen as Dole's potential strength in the general election has been part of his weakness in the nomination contests. Dole had consciously set himself somewhat apart from Reagan—he was critical of the Iran-Contra affair, of Reagan's handling of the economy, and even of Reagan. ("When I come to the White House I won't need fifteen staff people to tell me what to say and when to say it.") But this was natural to Dole: he had been of an independent mind throughout the Reagan Administration, and had often let his views be known, often acerbically. In New Hampshire, a solid thirty per cent of the Republicans were strong Reagan supporters, and *thought* that in voting for Bush they were voting for Reagan. In the Southern states, the Bush-Reagan lock was even stronger.

Both Bush and Dole used other pillars as well. Bush, who got former Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater's endorsement on the day before the New Hampshire primary, trotted the ailing Goldwater around with him in the South. Bush was sometimes also accompanied by Robert Dornan, a hot-tempered right-wing Representative from California. Dole—to the surprise and consternation of the Bush people—got Senator Strom Thurmond's endorsement shortly before the primary in Thurmond's home state of South Carolina (on the Saturday before March 8th), but Dole's allowing himself to be drawn into South Carolina, which the Bush people had wired, was a miscalculation. Also shortly before the South Carolina primary, Dole—after a prolonged pursuit—won the endorsement of Jeane Kirkpatrick, who then joined Dole on the circuit. (The theory is that Kirkpatrick threw her support to Dole because everyone assumes that Bush would make James Baker Secretary of State—if that's what Baker wants. Baker, who managed Bush's 1980 Presidential campaign, is advising Bush privately, and doing what he can as Treasury Secretary to make the economy safe for Republicans in the fall.) In South Carolina, as in New Hampshire and Illinois, Bush's fate was put in the hands of a strong governor (Carroll Campbell in South Carolina, John Sununu in New Hampshire, and James Thompson in Illinois), who delivered. Lee Atwater, Bush's campaign manager, says, "I told Bush over a year ago that the three people we most need to get into the campaign were John Sununu, Carroll Campbell, and Jim Thompson, that if we won those three states everything else would fall into place." Bush's strong victory in South Carolina (he got forty-eight per cent to Dole's twenty-one per cent and Pat Robertson's nineteen per cent) gave him an extra push on the following Tuesday. Brock knew that the psychology of the situation was going to make it difficult for Dole to recoup in Illinois. Dole said in Illinois, "I can beat Bush, but beating Reagan is impossible."

Another way the Bush people tried, with success, to secure Bush's position among the Republican voters was to allow no one to get between Bush and the conservative movement. Culturally, Bush is certainly not their kind of guy, and his own views, to the extent he has any, tend to be more moderate. At some risk—it did not help his image as "a wimp"—two years ago, Bush publicly courted Nackey Loeb, the acid publisher of the Manchester *Union Leader* and a fit successor to her late husband, William Loeb, and he also courted Jerry Falwell, who endorsed him. Bush was much derided for these actions—he was called "a lapdog"—but they did the job.

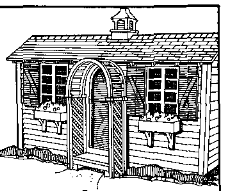
JACK KEMP, who had hoped to persuade Republicans that he was Reagan's true heir, was squeezed out by Bush, and dropped out on March 10th. Kemp, who campaigned in good spirits—no bitterness or self-pity—made it clear he was available to be Bush's running mate, but in any event is giving up his House seat, and plans to try to make himself the next conservative leader.

Pat Robertson, whose plausibility diminished as time went on (he came in third in South Carolina, which he had once said he had to win, and did poorly on March 8th, winning only nine delegates), is now all but out of the race. Robertson, who had built his reputation in the shelter of his own television program, owned by his own company, wasn't ready for the realities of secular politics. Bush even beat him among evangelicals in the South. This had something to do with the divisions within the evangelical movement between the charismatics—who speak in tongues and believe in faith healing, and of whom Robertson is one—and the fundamentalists. In state after state, Robertson got the vote of charismatics but didn't do particularly well among fundamentalists. Also, Bush cultivated fundamentalists, by saying that he accepts Jesus Christ "as my personal savior." Robertson didn't succeed in reaching beyond his religious followers to blue-collar workers, as he had hoped. He's keeping his campaign alive, but has acknowledged that only a "miracle" could make him the nominee. Robertson, who has said that he finds the 1984 Republican Platform acceptable (and therefore won't start a fight), has told Frank Fahrenkopf that he would like to address the Convention. All of the failed candidates will be accommodated. Robertson says that he will be "positive" for the rest of the campaign and has made it clear that he wants to run for President again.

THROUGHOUT all of this, neither Bush nor Dole was saying very much. Dole continued to insist, "I can make a difference," and that he is "a strong leader." In the South, he succumbed to the lure of protectionism on behalf of textile workers, and made himself out to be more of a militarist than he is. He tried to look tough by saying that if the Panamanian ruler, General Manuel Antonio Noriega, whom the Administration is still trying to dislodge (because of drug-running and corruption), isn't gone soon, the United States should use force. By the time Dole reached Illinois, he was pleading with the voters to keep his candidacy alive. Once again, he was undermined by his and his campaign's ineptitude: five days before the voting it became known that the campaign had cancelled all of the political ads for Illinois—before it was understood that the ads were to be supplanted by a thirty-minute special program on Saturday. (The Bush people appeared to have fanned this; campaigns can easily find out, from television stations, about each other's buys.) At the same time, it became known that Dole was thinking of getting out of the race, and that the campaign had gone through another round of layoffs (reducing its number of workers by eighty per cent over all). Then the thirty-minute program was a technical disaster.

Bush, in the South, returned to the Vice-Presidential cocoon he had briefly shed in New Hampshire—his aides argue, reasonably, that because of all the ground that had to be covered by March 8th Bush couldn't be as spontaneous as he had been in New Hampshire—but they were sufficiently sensitive to the "cocoon" stories that they had Bush all over the neighborhoods of Chicago, as well as the surrounding suburbs. In the South, Bush talked about defense and the deficit. Despite the changes inside the Soviet Union, Bush said in Florida, "There is no change in fundamental direction." He added that Reagan was right to call the Soviet Union an "evil empire," and he said, "Thank God that 'Blame America first' crowd out of that Vietnam thing is silent." In the case of the deficit, he talked about his concept of a "flexible freeze," and argued that Congress should give the President the line-item veto. Even Reagan has not been able to persuade Congress to give him this power. Bush's aides know that his message must be strengthened for the general election. Bush also says, for the obvious reason, that his Administration will be sensitive to the question of ethics.

Bush's aides point to a speech he gave in Chicago about his concept of the Presidency. In the speech, Bush said that on the first day of his Presidency he would initiate negotiations with Congress on the budget, and that he'd head the executive branch's negotiating team. His aides say that the fall campaign will have as a major theme Bush's concern that, over all, the President's powers have been too eroded by Congress: that a President should have a line-item veto and less interference by Congress in foreign affairs. Bush's theme, they say, will be a strong Presidency—he will offer himself as someone who has been there, who has thought about the Presidency and observed it closely. They appear to hope that the more Bush presents himself as the strong executive, the more he will be seen as one. Whether this will move millions is a question. (Of course, all of this rests on the assumption that Bush will be the nominee.) A fact that has not received much attention is that even in Illinois, when the Dole campaign had collapsed, Dole beat Bush among independent voters. This, along with some other things, could mean that if the Democrats settle their nomination amicably, and don't make any major mistakes, they have a real shot at the Presidency. —ELIZABETH DREW



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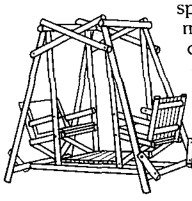

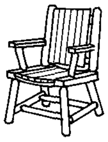

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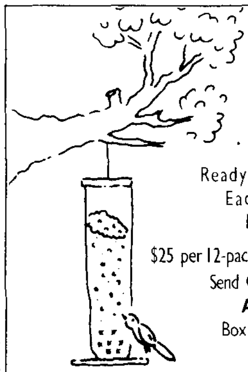

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THE story is told that an eminent figure in the dance world recently wrote to Merce Cunningham politely asking him to send, for reference purposes, a brief résumé of what he had done "since leaving Martha." Well, Cunningham left the Martha Graham company in 1945. This summer will mark thirty-five years of his own company's existence—over half his life. This (and much more) is history—isn't it?

In March, Cunningham presented at the Joyce Theatre the longest season of repertory he has ever given in New York: seven performances a week, four weeks, thirteen works. This is the most sustained exposure to his work that any city has had since that surprising season in London in 1964, when a week's visit was so warmly acclaimed that it was turned into a month's stay.

Twenty-four years later, a month of Merce no longer provokes astonished hosannas or outraged jeers. He is simply a landmark. Has something been lost in the process? No doubt. I never saw Carolyn Brown, Viola Farber, or other Cunningham dancers of that generation perform onstage, and I'm prepared to accept that with their departure a certain greatness vanished from the face of the world—just as I do when thinking of other dancers I never saw, like Violette Verdy and Edward Villella. And it is possible, I suppose, to see the revivals of "RainForest" and "Septet" mainly as ghost-town ballets. But Cunningham's recent repertory is no decaying museum or academic exercise ground, and his dancers aren't machines or clones. Far from it. Technique in Cunningham performance today is highly accomplished, and almost every iota of it is dissolved into style. Each of the men has registered as a character for some time; in recent seasons, the women have begun to follow suit, although some of them some of the time still like to maintain a good-girl impersonality. A few newcomers in the past couple of years, such as Dennis O'Connor and Larissa McGoldrick, have at once made an explosive, eccentric impact on the repertory; and the newest girl, Kimberly Bartosik, dances as if her whole life had been invested in joining this company. Experienced performers like Alan Good, Robert Swinston, Victoria Finlayson, and Kristy Santimyer project their own imaginative spell in all they do.

So when at other performances in March several New York dancegoers told me without any very good reason that they "didn't make it to Merce this season," I was stumped. ("I can't stand him" would have been reason enough.) Even in a city with the dance abundance of New York, a month of this repertory is too rich to be overlooked. What greater choreographers are active today? And what choreographer is in finer harmony with his present gathering of dancers? (Certainly this March provided no very impressive alternative.)

During the eighties, it is time to say, Cunningham's choreography has shown a fresh, autumnal wisdom—whether tragic ("Quartet"), idyllic ("Pictures"), lyrical ("Doubles"), bleak ("Shards"), or all these things by turns ("Fabrications"). It would be wrong to assume that just because Cunningham is no longer a revolutionary his work has had its day. (There are those who make that assumption, but they don't speak as if they had been any too interested in the first place.) Actually, most years of this decade have given us at least one new masterpiece; last year, for instance, produced "Shards," "Fabrications," and the stage version of "Points in Space." By such standards, this season's new items—"Eleven," in its world première; "Carousal," new to New York; the "RainForest" revival—should make the Joyce weeks rank as small beer. True, "RainForest" is part of Cunningham's legend (even if its most famed component is its Warhol décor: the billowing array of helium-filled silver pillows—they're both floating foliage and swaying undergrowth). It's still an arrestingly conceived work, its dances constructed largely of nonacademic material and marked by a subdued, feral quality. At the opening-night performance, it struck me as more subdued than feral—undernuanced. Even those pillows were well behaved. Not surprisingly, the revival elicited murmurs of nostalgia: "Helium isn't what it was when we were what we were," and so on. As for the premières, "Carousal" was a patchwork of convivial episodes; incidentally fascinating, it was flimsy over all. "Eleven," which contained variations on the choreographic forms Cunningham has been employing in recent years, and which in other circumstances might have emerged as an elegant work, was crippled by its score and its costumes.

And yet it was an enthralling season. The Merce experience remains—the Merce experience, that is, as it has come to be in the mid-eighties. The greatest pleasure of these seasons lies not in the premières or the golden oldies but in one's gradual immersion in those dancers, those dances, and those things which run deepest in his work: the unique stillnesses and distances and perspectives onstage; the odd, flat

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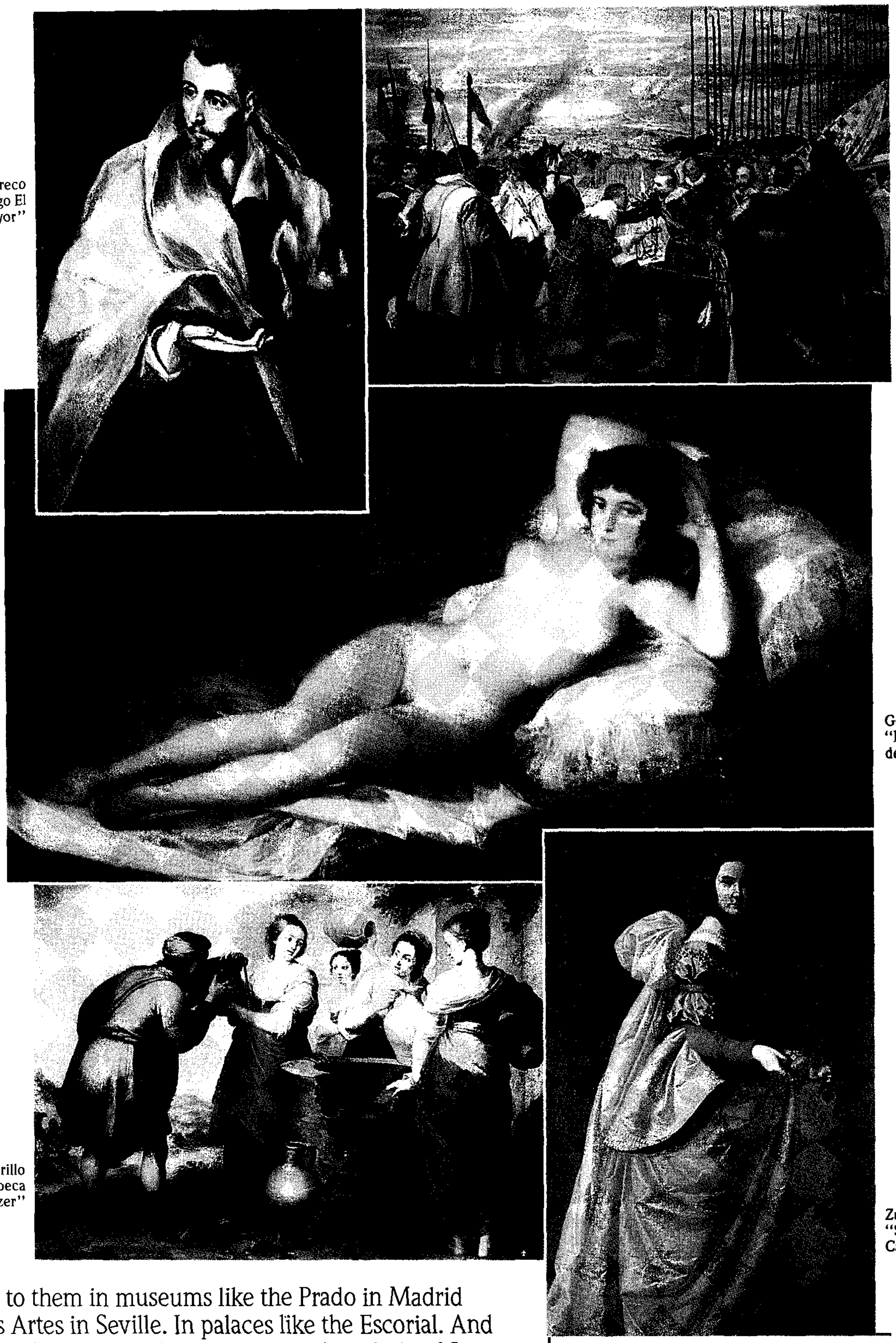

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natural rhythms; the countless resonances and ambiguities of each piece.

The finest Merce experience I have ever had was in Montreal in 1985, with a triple bill of "Inlets 2," "Doubles," and "Pictures." Yes, three idylls: it was like going from the countryside of Bohemia to the Forest of Arden and then on to Prospero's isle. No other choreographer in history could have brought it off. All three works were to be seen at the Joyce this year, albeit on different programs. In "Inlets 2," one of Cunningham's most hushed nature studies, I cherish the long-held Seurat poses in profile, the echoes of Nijinsky's "Faune" choreography they suggest, and the way they realize Edwin Denby's point about "Faune" that "the space between the figures becomes a firm body of air, a lucid statement of relationship, in the way intervening space does in the modern academy of Cézanne, Seurat, and Picasso." Above all, the work shows how those flat rhythms of Cunningham dance can catch the very essence of animal life: I see birds floating, taking wing, hovering, resettling; rodents scuttling and then freezing. This evocation of fauna, which Cunningham can reinforce in some dances with unspecific pictorial suggestions (hands held like paws, as in "RainForest;" the curve of a back; the angle of a haunch; the arch of a neck), is achieved primarily through timing. And it is part of his poetic genius that he can convey all this while employing in other works the most purely academic vocabulary. In "Points in Space" an ensemble of women, all facing the same way to concentrate on the rigors of stationary adagio, will suddenly change tempo and travel across the stage: something has disturbed this flock. In "Doubles" there is a web of rhythm: it is the most lyrically buoyant work in the repertory. The two women who walk around the stage's perimeter for long spells, and off into the wings and on again as if they'd never been absent, are all tender, quiet, calm legato. The other dancers have a much wider range of accent, and the solos appear peacefully full of human self-contradictions. "Pictures," with its miraculous tableaux of dancers linked in horizontal lines, its many serene slow variations on walking, presents dancers in an unaffected, rapt state of grace. Each dancer establishes a single tempo upon entrance and maintains it for a long span of time.

Some Cunningham works seem deliberately to splice material from two or more others. "Shards" grafts the stillnesses and concentration of "Inlets 2" onto the racked, dark urgency of "Quartet." What seems at first to be a nature study is punctuated by contained violence. Tension builds. No one communicates. "Fabrications" evokes phrases and motifs from numerous other works from the repertory, past and present, and assembles them into a broad canvas unlike anything else this choreographer has made.

There are many things in Cunningham's work that have long reminded me of Chekhov: the poignant overlap of several different narrative threads, the variety of material within any one character's solo, the contrast of fluent lyricism and blunt prosiness as a natural condition of human existence. "Fabrications" is his most thoroughly Chekhovian work, and it is like another Chekhovian dance work, by Frederick Ashton: it's Merce's "Enigma Variations"—rich in brief, telling incidents and in dramatic ironies. The work is studded with short duets in which couple after couple demonstrate their own species of coöperation and mutual absorption. Each duet counts powerfully, and even more moving is the way the duets are set apart from the ensembles that are the work's basic orchestration. Toward the end, Cunningham brings six couples on together in a ring, all performing the same few charged phrases of supported adagio. But there is no sense of completion in this—partly because you can't quite forget the fleeting glimpses you've had of soloists distanced from the main action, among them that old man who has bumbled from time to time across the stage. The score, by Emanuel de Melo Pimenta, seems to augment the fluctuations of feeling and immediacy in the work, and helps you to sense that this is one man's memory of a society and intimacies gone by.

In no other choreographer's repertory is stasis so expressive. Dancers standing still, dancers maintaining cool balance without a tremor, tableaux of stationary dancers supported or unsupported: these are basic Cunningham fare, and "Septet" reveals that they have been since at least 1953. In a central passage of this work we see a row of three male-female couples. As the Satie music proceeds, each woman hangs on her partner, and each is motionless in a different bleak pose: individual urgency preserved in amber. Cunningham went on to invent variations on this theme. How many straight lines, horizontal or diagonal, has he made out of three pairs, each carved in a different stationary position? And always the eye is rewarded as it takes in the geometrical intricacy and organizational wit of the tableau. But in the context of "Septet" the image has a peculiar force: it reminds me, curiously, less of other Cunningham works than of a dance for the two secondary couples late in Balanchine's Robert Schumann ballet, where each woman rests or presses upon her partner in one still pose after another. In "Septet" it reinforces the point of a note that Cunningham used to publish in the programs between 1955 and 1964—that the ballet's subject "is Eros," and its occurrence "is at the intersection of joy and sorrow." (Cunningham was right, however, not to use that note in the eighties revival. We can see now how very many things "Septet" is "about"—not least, ballet tradition and Merce's individual talent.)

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Cunningham's work reminds me of many things just because it is about people dancing and because of its catholic notion of what dancing can include. Watching the delicious opening duet (or double solo) of "Carousal," I recalled Denby's words about certain Balanchine ballets: "What an extraordinary absence of prejudice as to what is proper in classicism these odd works show." Chris Komar and Dennis O'Connor—left and right of center, respectively—execute two different solos that return at different points to the same motif, a very Cunningham pattern of high-plucked, treading footwork that gets them nowhere in particular. Doing it, they resemble wading birds, or Wilis in "Giselle." But each solo contains what dance analysts would call "movement information" of a completely distinct kind. Sometimes the distinction is in a minor detail. Each man retreats into a striking fourth position, leans backward, chest spread proudly, and looks over

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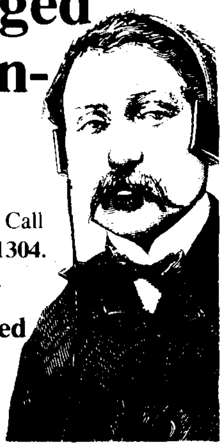

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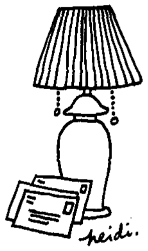
his shoulder: it's angled so that whereas Komar looks away from us, tossing his head back, right out of sight, as if in despair, O'Connor turns his face to us with a touch of self-glamorizing nonchalance. What a neatly odd couple (Komar has been in the company fourteen years longer than O'Connor; both are blond and of a height), and what a neatly odd split-focus duet (O'Connor's section contains falls, rolls, and hops that are nothing like Komar's). If only “Carousal” were that *neatly* odd throughout. Instead, it's a list of communal vignettes that don't cohere. We never recapture the taut rhythm of the opening.



“Eleven,” of course, is a right little tease. After all, we knew where we were with “Septet,” which is for six dancers, and with “Quartet,” for five. But “Eleven” has *eleven* dancers, and occasionally they're all onstage together. The Master must mean *something* by this, but I missed it. Fending off the wretched music, as I tried to do at a second performance, I isolated several new aspects of movement information. In particular, the duets here are different. Throughout the eighties, Cunningham's duets have tended to follow the rules of ice dancing: no high lifts and not more than a yard or so between male and female. But here are couples addressing each other with the whole width of the stage between them, sometimes even along a diagonal bisected by another couple's duet. There are further points to admire, not least a rather Ashtonian trio for two men and a woman, in which Patricia Lent's line as she is lifted by Robert Swinston is echoed by the stationary Alan Good. But to what end? Robert Ashley's score is Cunningham's most intrusive to date. Two metrical monologues, chanted in contrasting Japanese and American accents, that turn out to be a dialogue of sorts taken from a scene in a post-mod sci-fi soap opera, whose metres may at times be related to the choreography . . . And, yes, while I was trying not to listen, whole sections of Cunningham invention went in one eye and out the other.

Would that I could say the same of the designs. The company's design department has for almost four years been in the undistinguished hands of William Anastasi and Dove Bradshaw. At their undistinguished best (“Native Green,” not seen this season; the video-dance original of “Points in Space;” the “Shards” costumes), they seem to design with at least a backward glance at the more striking work of their predecessors. Thank heaven, there were no backdrops for “Carousal” or “Eleven.” The “Eleven” costumes, and the backdrops for “Grange Eve,” “Fabrications,” and “Shards,” suggest little Abstract Expressionist sketches blown up and thrown onto the stage like custard pies. The baggy costumes used in “Fabrications,” “Grange Eve,” and “Carousal” are appropriate to those works' moods. Even so, all of them lack any theatrical dimension, and the specific characteristics of each are so unmemorable that the dancers seem to be dressed in rehearsal kit, waiting until the next Mark Lancaster comes along to array them in impeccable combinations of Cézanne colors.

It is still an unwritten law of Cunningham dance theatre that he, in his very late sixties, should appear in one work per evening. And the works he uses for this purpose—“Quartet,” “Pictures,” “Grange Eve,” “Fabrications”—compose a repertory. To enjoy watching him is to enjoy the pleasure of ruins—the way we enjoy the artistry of those singers who committed their singing to the earliest 78s when they were long past their vocal prime. It would be courteous to say, as Herman Klein said of Adelina Patti's recordings, that you are observing the *beaux restes* of great singing, but, really, Cunningham's aren't very *beaux*. And there isn't a lot left he can do. Few things are simpler for a dancer than to rise from a kneeling position. When Cunningham does it in “Fabrications,” however, he steadies himself with one hand during the first part of the maneuver. Yet he does it with exactly the same timing at every performance. The precise spontaneity is endearing. It reminds me of Ralph Richardson's performance, at a similar age, in a William Douglas Home play I have otherwise forgotten, in which he made something touchingly hilarious out of slowly bending his knees and solemnly preparing to sit on a lawn. Cunningham is growing old—publicly, ungracefully, disarmingly.

—Alastair Macaulay

Editors' Note: Mr. Macaulay will be our guest critic for the next five months while Arlene Croce is on leave.

BOOKS

To Be a Sun Again

NOTHING in the visible estrangement of poetry from prose is more astonishing than their estrangement in one person. Octavio Paz—Mexico's famous poet, born in 1914—is a torrential writer, whose successive books of prose and verse have enriched our century; while his prose is often circumstantial, historical, and evidential, his poetry is not. It is something else. Someone reading the verse as one reads prose might say, "Abstract, generalizing, unreal." But someone reading the verse as one reads verse would say, "Musical, sensual, real." When a single historical writer slips into two such different gears, some explanation is required. For Paz, the political real (present in all his essays) is not the desired real (aspired to in all his poems). In his divided self Paz replicates what he has said of the history of his country:

> The history of Mexico is the history of a man seeking his parentage, his origins. He has been influenced at one time or another by France, Spain, the United States and the militant indigenists of his own country, and he crosses history like a jade comet, now and then giving off flashes of lightning. What is he pursuing in his eccentric course? He wants to go back beyond the catastrophe he suffered: he wants to be a sun again.

The return to origins is for Paz a social ideal; it will throw off the alien mentalities of the Conquistadores, the Jesuits, and Enlightenment rationalist positivism, thereby allowing Mexico a non-European, non-North American existence. Paz's Shelleyan hopes refuse the larger, Yeatsian view that all change—even imposed change, like that of conquest—is proof of human creativity. Yeats' Chinese sages stare on the tragic scene with gaiety, seeing only the enlivening spectacle of temporal change. Paz, though he appreciates and meditates on the Buddhist equation of the phenomenal world with the void, finally falls into the ranks of reformist humanists. He is called to utterance, especially in his prose, by the immense social, intellectual, and aesthetic needs of Mexico—a state still in the process of active formation.

This century, says Paz, saw the old indigenous realities of Mexico "cloaked by the new progressivist and liberal values." He adds, "These masked realities marked the beginning of inauthenticity and lies, endemic ills of Latin American countries." This is his repeated indictment, and it supposes that the moral archeology of Mexico resembles its physical archeology: under the modern city, the Aztec stones; under a modern moral veneer, Indian authenticity.

> By the beginning of the twentieth century, pseudo-modernity was in full swing: railways and *latifundismo* [the holding of large landed estates by individuals], a democratic constitution and a *caudillo* [dictator] within the best Hispano-Arabic tradition, positivist philosophers and pre-Columbian *caciques* [Indian chiefs], Symbolist poetry and illiteracy.

Paz has vowed to recover radical innocence—whatever in Mexico (or in himself) survives from a pre-Conquest, non-Christian past.

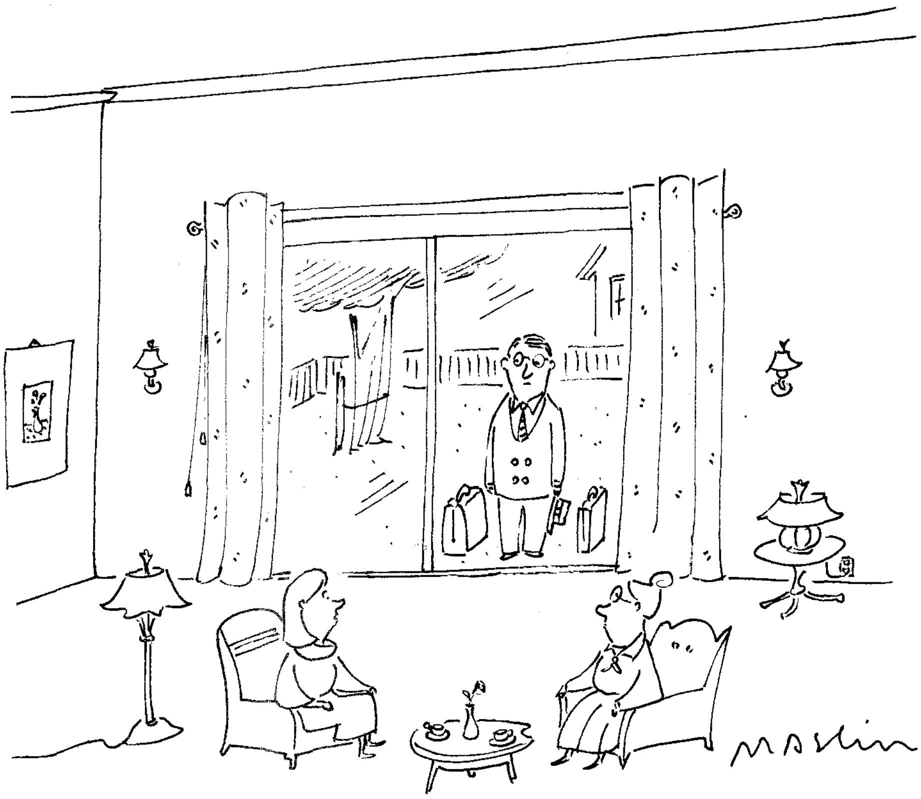
Paz's own part-Indian descent, strongly marked in his features, may account in part for his mission, but it is also true that his youthful Marxism and modernism repudiated the religious and political status quo into which he was born. An early "Hymn Among the Ruins," describing boys smoking marijuana on a pre-Aztec pyramid, asks the question that animates all Paz's work:

> Night falls on Teotihuacán.
> On top of the pyramid the boys are
> smoking marijuana,
> harsh guitars sound.
> What weed, what living waters will
> give life to us,
> where shall we unearth the word?

Paz's quest may have been determined at birth: coming into the world with the surname Peace is, for a poet, itself a destiny.

The sumptuous "Collected Poems of Octavio Paz, 1957-1987," edited and translated by Eliot Weinberger, with the English and Spanish *en face* (New Directions; $37.50), collects poems written in the thirty years since Indiana published the early poems (1935-55). "To be a sun again"—this ambition means that in poetry Paz must speak as the sun would speak. It would speak from its own turbulent and radiant center, the voice of action, not reaction; origin, not consequence; morality, not acculturation; innocence, not conviction of guilt. In short, Paz's poetic voice aims to be not that of the historical man but in the strictest sense an assumed voice—prophetic, solar, essential, erotic.

For Paz, imagined unity is historically recoverable, chiefly in a sensuality motivated by love. (Sexual intercourse without love does not interest



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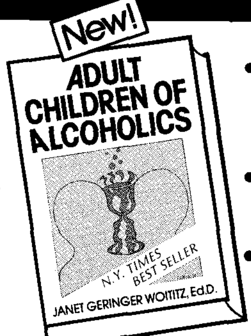

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Paz, nor does a sexless, platonic love.) The importance of eroticism for Paz—as an engagement in which the shell of the self is broken, depression is vanquished by joy, the other is perceived to be a part of, and consequently as real as, the self, and only the present is actual—guarantees the persistence of the erotic theme through Paz's fifty years of writing. For him, eroticism answers not only solipsism but also historical determinism, geographical difference, and even the mortality of the body. It is, says the poem "Axis," the spindle on which the world turns. This poem uses interpenetration of natural essences to mime the physical reconfigurations made by two interlaced bodies. (Here, as later, the translation I use is my own, since I want to remain as close as possible to the words of the original.)

fountain of bodies
you, nighttime of wheat
you, forest in the sun
you, water waiting

It is tempting, in the light of such poems, to describe Paz as a writer confined to archetypal symbols; and critics who do not examine the Spanish original are likely to yield to the temptation. But symbols alone—even the powerful, elemental ones (water, fire, forest, etc.) on which Paz relies—never made a poem. A poem is a system of relations composed of subsystems of relations—musical, rhythmic, structural, semantic, tonal. In "Axis," for example, an intricate pattern of repetitions moving left to right, right to left, governs one phrase and its variations in time:

Through the conduits of blood . . .
Through the conduits
of bone . . .
Through the conduits of night . . .
Through the conduits of sun . . .
Through the conduits
of the body.

Another system of relations governs the several words ("blood," "body," "fountain," "night," "wheat," "forest") that in the ritual dance of "Axis" change places between the man and the woman. After calling himself "red wheat," "night," and "water," the male speaker attributes these nouns to the woman, calling her "you, nighttime of wheat," "you, water waiting." And, lest it be thought that she only borrows embodiment from him, the poem makes her a "fountain of night" and "forest" before he, in turn, becomes night or forest, and before their bodies become joint fountains. As he remakes her, she

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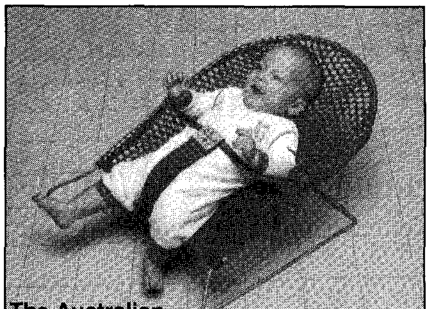

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remakes him. In Paz's reworking of Petrarchan love, the erotic exchange is to be an equal one, and this ideal is represented in formal terms when the symbols of love are seen to be deliberately balanced and exchanged between male and female.

"Axis" is a good example of the generalizing and symbolist Paz. When Paz does become particular, even confessional, he does so after a gradual, meditative progress from the whole to the part. The account of Paz's life given by Weinberger in the preface is, naturally enough, dryly factual:

> Paz was born in Mexico City on March 31, 1914. On his father's side, the family was mestizo, from the state of Jalisco. His grandfather was a well-known journalist and writer who fought against the French; his father, a lawyer who took part in the Mexican Revolution, represented Zapata in the United States and was one of the architects of the agrarian reforms.

But poetry, in the great autobiographical meditation "A Draft of Shadows," ventures into bitter circumstantiality:

> Strapped to the rack of alcohol,
> my father came and went through flames
> from vomit to thirst.
> Between the sleepers and the rails
> of a dusty fly-blown train station,
> we picked up, one evening, the pieces of his body.
> I never could talk to him.

The last sentence suggests an Oedipal motive for Paz's enormous output, just as a competitive motive appears in a comic poem showing the child Paz up against male family reminiscence:

> My grandfather, drinking his coffee,
> told me tales of Juárez and Porfirio,
> the Zouaves and the Silver Band.
> And the tablecloth smelled of gunpowder.
>
> My father, drinking his drink,
> told tales of Zapata and Villa,
> Soto y Gama, the Flores brothers.
> And the tablecloth smelled of gunpowder.
>
> I stayed still:
> who was there for me to tell tales of?

Between the autobiographical poems and the incantatory ones we read Paz's panoramic descriptions of contemporary Mexican reality, from the savagely disappointed denunciations of "Return" (written after Paz resigned the Ambassadorship to India, in 1968, when the Mexican government massacred unarmed students) to the more recent, cinematic "I Speak of the City":

> I speak of the half-light of certain churches and the flickering candles at the altars,
> the timid voices with which the desolate talk to saints and Virgins in a passionate, faltering language,
> I speak of dinner under a squinting light at a wobbly table with chipped plates. . . .
> I speak of the paralytic slum, the cracked wall, the dry fountain, the graffito'd statue,
> I speak of garbage heaps the size of mountains, and a sullen sunlight filtered by the smog,
> of broken windows and the desert of scrap iron, of last night's crime.

The expansiveness visible in the catalogues of "I Speak of the City" is a trait found also in Rubén Darío and Pablo Neruda, Paz's great predecessors (both of them influenced by Whitman). Like Whitman, Paz never forgets musicality, even in his most socially panoramic poems. "Form has meaning," he reminds us, "and, what is more, in the realm of art only form possesses meaning." His fidelity to form has kept Paz from subordinating poetry to social commentary, even in his long descriptive poems.

Besides Paz the incantatory and social poet, there is another Paz—an epigrammatic poet. Some of his best poems suggest Emily Dickinson (see "The Hummingbird"). "Epitaph for an Old Woman" superimposes, with perfect concision, a couple's embrace in death on their embrace in life:

> They buried her in the family grave
> and deep down the dust
> that was once her husband
> shuddered:
> what was delight in life
> is grief in death.

A more recent epigrammatic poem offers a definition of poetry, mediating with both wit and profundity between poem as dream and silence and poem as deed and voice. Poetry exists, as the title suggests, "Between What I See and What I Say":

> it speaks
> what I hush,
> hushes
> what I speak,
> dreams
> what I forget.
> It's not speech:
> it's a deed.
> It's a deed
> of speech.

In poetry,

> eyes speak,
> words look,
> looks think. . . .
> Eyes close,
> the words open.

In such poems Paz is the disciple of poets like Bashō, of whose haiku he writes, "The whole world fits inside seventeen syllables."

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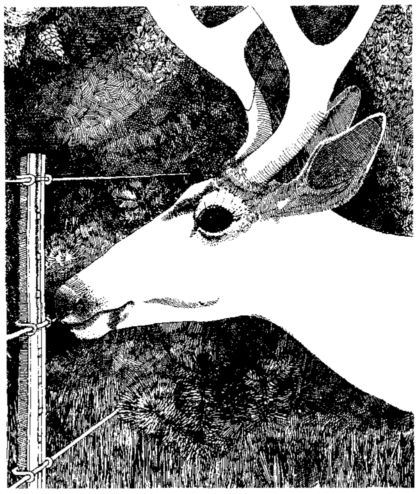

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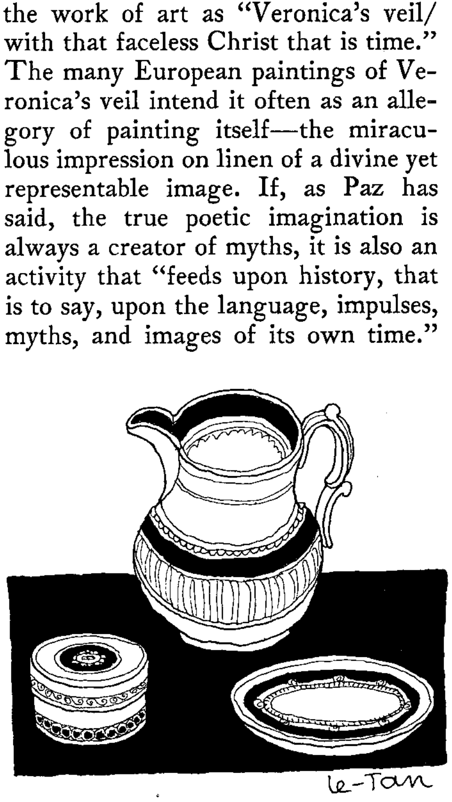
new way resembles for Paz nothing so much as the radical uniqueness of each sexual act: even with the same partner, there is never identity of mood, moment, sensation. The leap of imaginative energy into embodiment in words and the dispersion of erotic energy in sexual activity seem to Paz virtually identical processes, both in excitation and in dissipation. Each is a proving of the self-in-act upon the pulses of the moment. As the basis of a poetics, this conviction has some dubious results: because words are desperately inadequate (though they are all we have) as representations of sexual sensations and erotic passion, Paz's love poems sometimes seem, even in Spanish, to resemble each other overmuch.

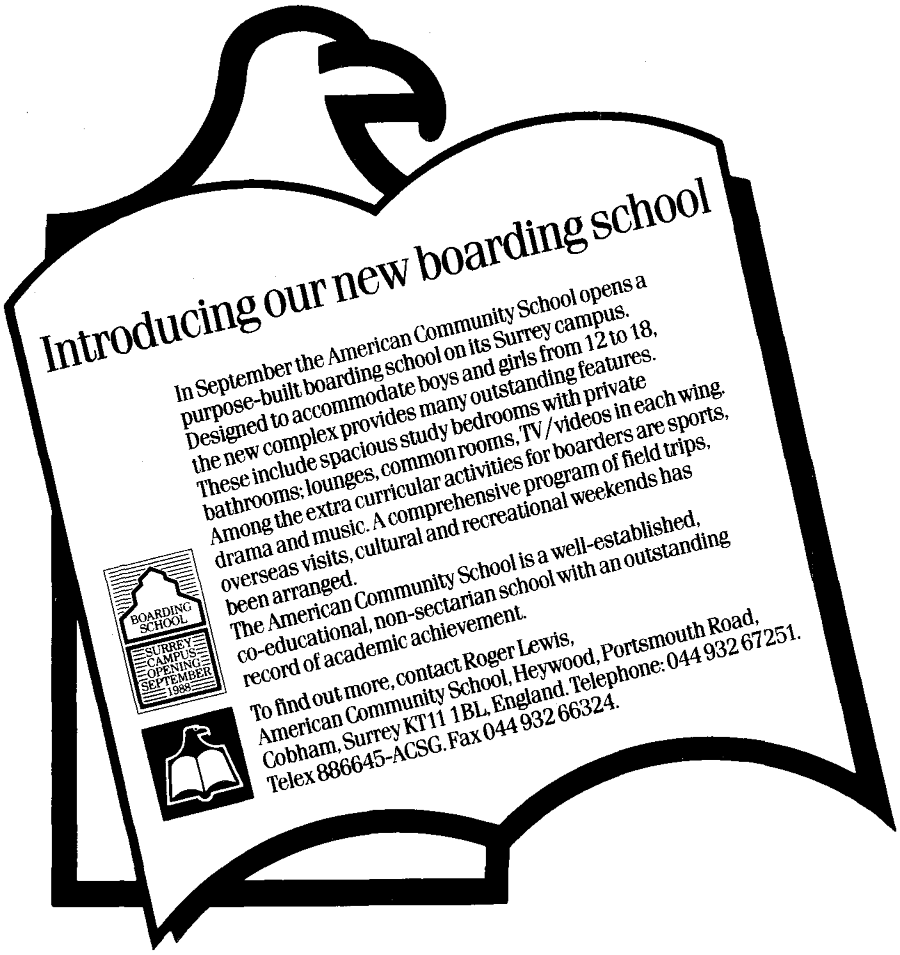
A still riskier poetic enterprise is the representation of nothingness, when Paz's interest in Buddhism leads to attempts to pass beyond the phenomenal to Nirvana. Beyond time passing and time staying, says Paz (somewhat in the manner of Eliot in the "Quartets"), there is a third state, a way of being of a third sort:

> being without being, empty
>   plenitude,
> hour without hours. . . .
>   It is god:
> it inhabits the names that deny it.

This *via negativa* leads in writing to "air that sculpts itself and dissolves, / a fleeting allegory of the true names" of reality.

Perhaps more congenial to Paz's love of imagery is his representation of the work of art as "Veronica's veil/ with that faceless Christ that is time." The many European paintings of Veronica's veil intend it often as an allegory of painting itself—the miraculous impression on linen of a divine yet representable image. If, as Paz has said, the true poetic imagination is always a creator of myths, it is also an activity that "feeds upon history, that is to say, upon the language, impulses, myths, and images of its own time."

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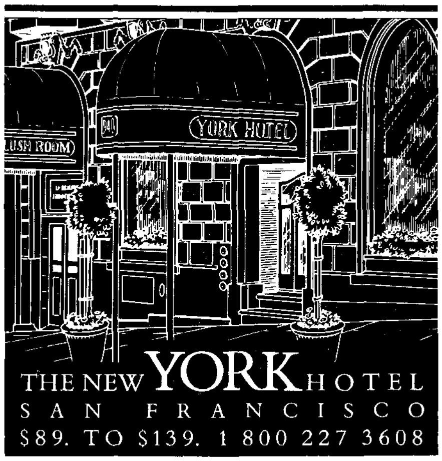
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The veil of Veronica exhibits myth and history at once.

Paz worries about his placement, as a poet, between myth and history:

> I am not a historian. My passion is poetry and my occupation literature; neither gives me the authority to pass judgment on the agitations and upheavals of our era.

Nonetheless, he has written persistently on the contemporary scene. He argues that his writing is non-ideological, that he has never written "from a perspective firmly rooted in the certainties of an ideology with encyclopedic pretensions such as Marxism, or in the immutable truths of religions such as Christianity or Islam." Yet to one who does not share it Paz's myth of recoverable permanence—of an essential mythical principle—reads like an ideology. "Modern poets," he has remarked, "looked for the principle of change; poets of the dawning age look for the unalterable principle that is the root of change." To original sin, Paz says, he prefers "the *other* central theme of the West, that of Rousseau and Blake: original innocence." Paz's investigation of Tantric Buddhism, his interest in Tantric art and erotic temple sculpture in India are attempts to understand an undivided consciousness that can dwell in a pure present, a consciousness recoverable for us, he firmly asserts, through "sex, passions, dreams"—especially through sex, where "lovers descend toward always more ancient and naked states: they recover the animal and even the plant that live in each of us." All this—radical innocence, changelessness, undivided unity of being, sex as spiritual discipline—has a long history in Western poetry. (See the work of Yeats for another modern instance.) It is a symbolic system, if not an ideology, that is identifiable with Romanticism (as Paz himself asserts). It counters the skeptical, classical, and intellectual emphasis of the Enlightenment. It is not in these beliefs that Paz is original; it is in finding for them an embodiment in contemporary Spanish that he makes a claim upon us, retooling the "arthritic Spanish" of the past into a Mexican present.

This collection offers enormous pleasure to anyone who can read Spanish with the help of an *en face* translation. It is a pity that the translation is not always accurate. There are absolute errors, as when "In spite of the famines, the women are well endowed" comes out as "Because of hunger, the women are well endowed" and when "It is getting dark" ("*anochece*") is translated as "last night" ("*anoche*"). There are solecisms: lines that, properly translated, should read "Last night there were three of us in your bed—I [lay between] you and the moon" ("*tú yo la luna*") lose the point of their pronoun placement and become ungrammatical and cummings-cute by being rendered, "we were three:/the moon you & me." An inhumanly beautiful poem by Quevedo, used by Paz as an epigraph, exhibits in its translated version here the word "irregardless." These simple lapses are baffling in the light of Weinberger's brilliant success in finding English equivalents for Paz's surrealist verbal experiments and puns.

Nonetheless, the *en face* presentation provides, for those of us with only amateur Spanish, a welcome entry into Paz's opulent lyric conceptions and haunting music. We leave with images of Aztec ruins, sunlit odalisques, Indian jungles, and modern cities, having heard hymns, prophecies, denunciations, dirges, and limpid songs. Of these, the most beautiful is the very recent "Wind and Water and Stone;" its hypnotic permutations are a permanent addition to the literature of the four elements, even though, as an earthly poem, it must leave out the element of Heaven—fire. I give only the opening stanza, with the translation first:

> The water hollows the stone,
> the wind disperses the water,
> the stone stops the wind.
> Water and wind and stone.
>
> *El agua horada la piedra,*
> *el viento dispersa el agua,*
> *la piedra detiene al viento.*
> *Agua, viento, piedra.*

The three other stanzas are worth looking up, and learning by heart as a charm for living. —HELEN VENDLER

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

THE BEAN TREES, by Barbara Kingsolver (Harper & Row; $16.95). Taylor Greer, the heroine of this lively first novel, is a sharp, determined girl who spends her high-school years avoiding the fate of so many of her contemporaries, who wind up pregnant and stuck in Pittman, Kentucky. Taylor leaves home for good in a '55 Volkswagen, but she becomes a mother when someone leaves a Cherokee baby on the passenger seat of her car outside a bar in Oklahoma. Grad-

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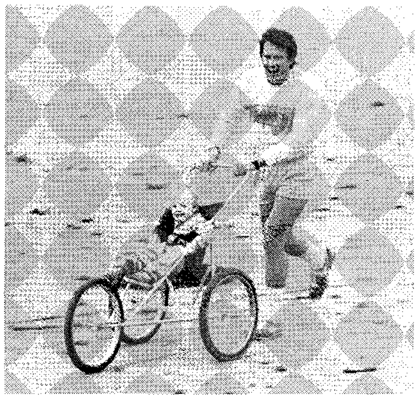

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ually, Taylor realizes that the slow, silent child she calls Turtle suffered some abuse, and the story is, predictably, about their parallel growth, which is documented in unpredictable ways: Taylor finds work at an automobile-tire shop that is also a safe house for Central American refugees, and Turtle emerges from her catatonic state with a definite interest in vegetables ("bean" is her first word). Sometimes the down-home cleverness of Ms. Kingsolver's prose seems formulaic, but this is an easy book to enjoy.

Augustus Carp, Esq., by Himself: Being the Autobiography of a Really Good Man, by Sir Henry Howarth Bashford (Penguin; $4.95, paper). A sublime, ferocious farce, first published anonymously in 1924, narrated by a world-class chucklehead. Augustus Carp proves to be a dullard in the classroom, but he has already acquired, at his litigious father's corpulent knee, a knack for pious greed. Some of the best lines, delivered deadpan, are given to drinkers, smokers, dancers, and adulterers. "It's one of those faces one wants to lean on," an actress's dresser, contemplating Carp's bulk, decides. A potential employer, about to be blackmailed into launching the younger Carp's career as (in the elder Carp's words) a "Xtian magnate," suggests that he become a missionary in a very distant land. "And where his personal appearance," the man's wife adds, "could scarcely fail to be such a protection to him." In a foreword, Robert Robinson credits Anthony Burgess with getting "Augustus Carp, Esq." reprinted in 1966. In an afterword, Anthony Burgess regrets that Sir Henry, Chief Medical Officer to the Post Office and Hon. Physician to King George VI, died in 1961.

GENERAL

The Generals: Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee, by Nancy Scott Anderson and Dwight Anderson (Knopf; $24.95). This is a well-wrought, absorbing biography, doing justice to both men. Lee was the son of Light-Horse Harry Lee, Washington's renowned cavalry commander, and he married Martha Washington's great-granddaughter. But the elder Lee, who died when Robert was eleven, ruined the family by speculation, and Mary Custis Lee preferred her parents to her husband. Grant's father was an aggressive, intrusive self-made man, forever chivying his son, and although Julia Dent Grant was a supportive wife, she could do little for her husband except comfort him in his humiliations. Both men were sent to West Point—Lee in 1825, and Grant in 1839—for a free education, and, apart from the brief excitement of the Mexican War, both found military service boring. Lee concealed his frustrations behind a façade of charm and manners, while Grant could never hide his need for acceptance, but the authors make it plain that both generals were unhappy men, and that only a war of unprecedented destructiveness released their energies and abilities.

Stranger in the Forest: On Foot Across Borneo, by Eric Hansen (Houghton Mifflin; $17.95). An out-of-the-ordinary travel book. The author, a Californian, had been living by his wits in Asia and the Middle East for several years when, during a sojourn in Sarawak, on the island of Borneo, he conceived a desire to journey on foot through hundreds of miles of dense jungle to the coast. His plan was to pick up guides as he went from village to village, and to backpack enough trade goods to pay his way. How he carried out this bold and risky scheme—very few white men had ever made the trip, which, besides being fraught with hazard, was in his case illegal—is the subject of his narrative. Mr. Hansen is a first-rate writer, and his evocation of the closed-over environment of the rain forest is enthralling: a "steaming, fetid world of great horrors and indescribable beauties," and "unforgiving of the slightest human weakness."

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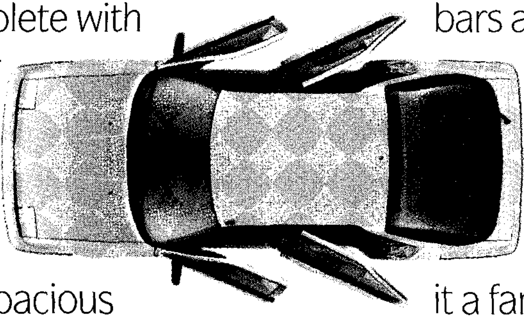

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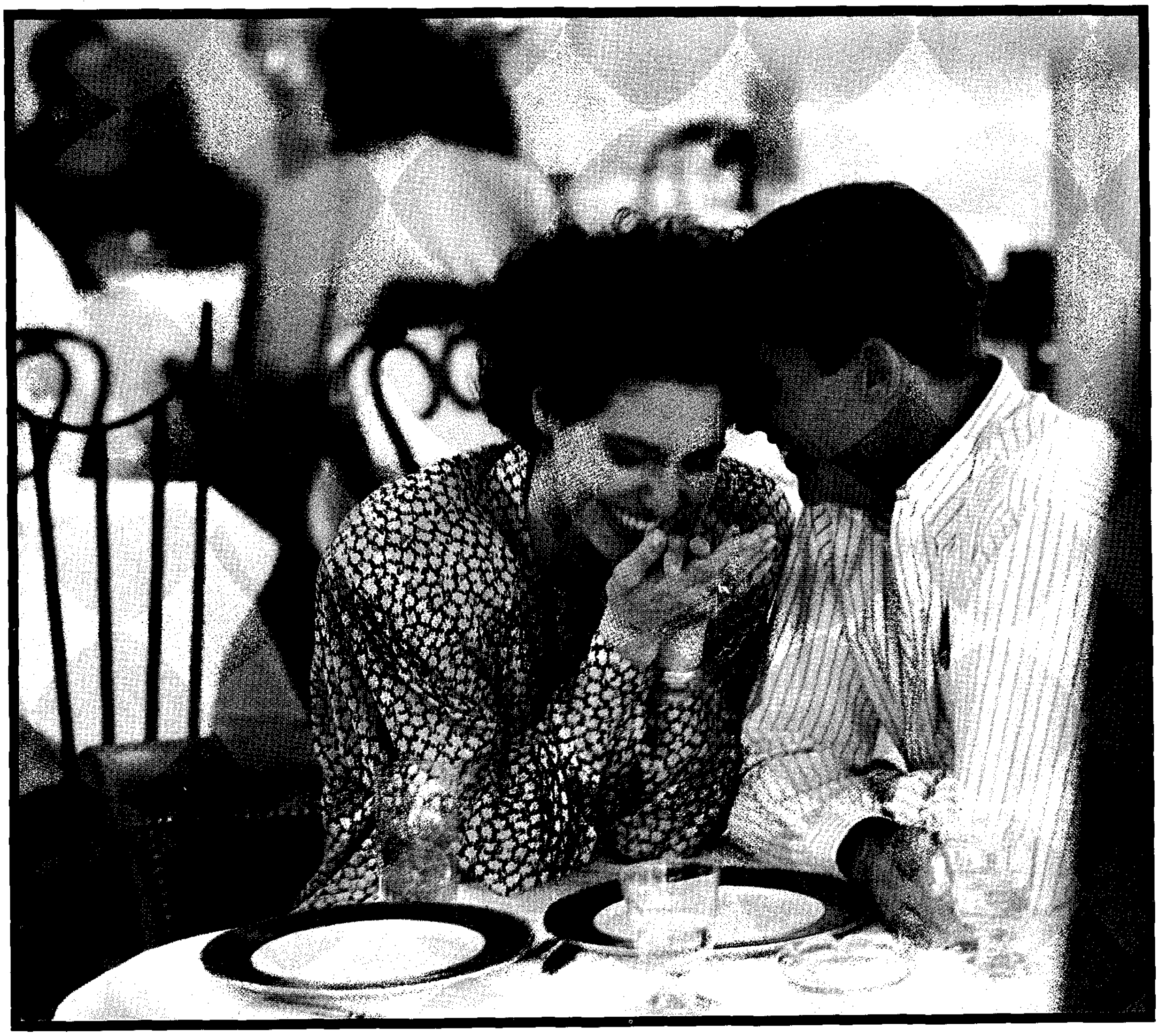

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